Śrīla Jīva Gosvāmī's

Gopāla Campū

Volume II - Uttara Campū

HH Bhanu Swami

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Gopāla Campū

Volume 2 - Uttara Campū

Śrīla Jīva Goswāmī

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DEDICATION

This book is dedicated to

His Divine Grace A.C. Bhaktivedānta Swāmī Prabhupāda
Founder-Ācārya of International Society for Krishna Consciousness

who inspired the world to take up the path of bhakti.

Preface

A campū is a literary composition mixing poetry and prose, displaying literary ornaments and various verse forms, often using words with double meaning. Śrila Jīva Gosvāmī has written Gopāla-campū describing the pastimes of Kṛṣṇa from his appearance until his return to Vraja. Though Kavikarṇapura has written Ananda-vṛndāvana Campū on the same topic, the unique feature of this campū is that the whole story has been arranged to lead to Kṛṣṇa's final union in marriage to the gopīs.

The Gopala-campū narrates the pastimes as found in the Srimad Bhagavatham with the addition of rasa. Jīva Gosvāmī writes that it is a "work composed of the bliss of Radha and Krishna" and "those who desire to see Vraja and to attain Goloka will achieve that destination by this work."

Śrila Jīva Gosvāmī's use of words and grammar is often difficult. The text is taken from the Puri Das' edition (1947). The numbering system is taken from that edition, though other editions have different numbering systems. The numbers in square brackets at the beginning of a line indicate a prose portion. The numbers between vertical lines at the end of a paragraph indicate a verse. Where whole verses are quoted in Sanskrit in the original work these have been reproduced with translations. Where a few words of a verse are quoted, only the translation is given, without quoting the Sanskrit, though the verse reference is given. Since the whole story is narrated by two young boys alternately,

who often relate conversations between individuals which contain conversations within conversations, conventional use of quotation marks is awkward. For long sections where one person speaks or when one person speaks over several numbered sections colons are used to indicate the commencement of the speech. For short conversations within one numbered section conventional quotation marks are used.

To enable the readers to also relish the poetic beauty and rhythm in the Sanskrit songs in Gopala- campū, an audio CD (not available with ebook) has been made keeping in mind the ragas (musical notes) mentioned at times in the book itself and according to the mood of the song.

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Part One: Satisfaction with Uddhava’s Arrival in Vraja

Chapter One

Attraction of Kṛṣṇa and the Gopīs

O Kṛṣṇa! O Caitanya! O Rūpa and Sanātana! O Gopāla! O Raghunātha! O Vallabha who has attained Vraja! Please protect me! ||1||

I worship the Lord by whose mercy the first part was quickly completed and the second part should also be completed. ||2||

[1 - 3] The first part was narrated in the order that the events occurred.

There is a forest called Vṛndāvana, which supplies all things necessary for pastimes. There Kṛṣṇa makes himself the object of realization for devotees filled with longing. Just as the sky is the shelter of the zodiac, just as the king is the shelter of *dharma*, just as Vedas are the shelter of the discernment of truth, just as attainment of desire is the shelter of happiness, just as *rasa* is the shelter of *vibhāva, anubhāva, sāttvika-bhāva, vyabhicāri-bhāva* and *sthāyi-bhāva*, just as Kṛṣṇa is the shelter of six qualities and the shelter of *prema,* just as Vaikuṇṭha is the shelter of Nārāyaṇa, Kṛṣṇa is the shelter of all beings.

[4] In Vṛndāvana, Goloka exists, unseen by our eyes because of its power of invisibility. In Goloka, Kṛṣṇa, playing the roles of son or friend in a suitable manner under the control of the devotees, does not deviate from that love. By his mere thought, like a touchstone, all

actions are accomplished. He is never free of repaying the amassed debt of the fifth goal, the wealth of *prema* of all persons living there in bliss.

[5] Though he exists there eternally, leaving Goloka with the residents and revealing himself as unequaled with great pleasure, the destroyer of demons gives joy to this universe. He enters like a divine dancer coming from the dressing room.

[6] Kṛṣṇa entered Vraja after killing Dantavakra (who had crooked teeth and who desired to kill the righteous), as is revealed in evidence in the *Padma Purāṇa* concerning the residents of Vraja. At that time Snigdhakaṇṭha and Madhukaṇṭha, the distinguished bards, who had received the essence of association through the waves of the ocean of mercy of Nārada (who is expert in *bhakti* and skillful in fulfilling more than one can desire), arrived at the house where Nanda, his son and others were residing.

[7] According to the order given by Nārada at that time, with great concentration, the two boys, most respectable, sounding like the music of a stringed instrument, revealed the pastimes of Kṛṣṇa in Vraja, which produce all happiness, while they exchanged questions and relevant points.

[8] Previously the two maintained their lives by telling stories concerning Kṛṣṇa's father and grandfather and similarly maintained their life by fresh poetry filled with the beauty of Kṛṣṇa's pastimes, just as one tells stories about a person after his birth.

[9] They then related the wondrous pastimes of Kṛṣṇa in order.

[10 - 11] Those pastimes will be recollected in order to show the later pastimes. Oh! By his mercy Pūtanā became a pure woman, the cart demon fell down like a grass mat, the whirlwind demon became loose like a pile of grass, the two Arjuna trees received mercy like Arjuna received, Vatsāsura became small like a calf, and Baka became like a crane. Vyoma became like the air—vacant.

[12] Let the description stop here, but the stories are most remarkable. Agha became sinless, Kāliya, like a snake shedding its skin, became liberated with *bhakti* even while he was living.

[13] Spreading the fame of Balarāma through his unique qualities, courageous Kṛṣṇa made Dhenuka and Pralamba enter the blazing fire of Balarāma's power. The sweetness caused by that bestows intense emotions in our hearts.

[14] Oh! Look at the friendly affection of Kṛṣṇa to his people. To protect them he swallowed the forest fire.

[15] When he was in *paugaṇḍa* age, without effort, his left arm became the large handle for the umbrella of Govardhana. Look at his extraordinary nature! He returned the Gandharva named Sudarśana to his beautiful form after he was born as a snake. Considering the jewel on Śaṅkhacūḍa, a low Yakṣa, to be improper, he took the jewel from him, leaving his forehead bare. He killed the bull demon. Taking the ending (*i)* from the word Keśi he made the name successful by taking it for himself in the word Keśava.

The beauty of his birth, the beauty of his *kaumāra* years, the beauty of his *paugaṇḍa* age and the beauty of his *kaiśora* age immediately attract our hearts. Combining together they now agitate us with strong greed. ||3||

Remembering continually the parental affection of his first years, the friendship of many boys in his *paugaṇḍa* age, the inconceivable love of the *gopīs* in the glory of his *kaiśora* age, our minds cannot move forward. Let the mind go far into these pastimes, mix together and remain there, like treasure within the house of a merchant. ||4||

[16] We have considered describing separation which is useful for nourishing the various *rasas*, having similar attractiveness. Though the two reciters revealed Kṛṣṇa's sweetness, most enchanting, in these *rasas,* they described in brief his going to Mathurā, returning to Vraja and finally entering Goloka as described when Nārada, most skillful at eliminating the burden of sorrow of the devotees, talked to Kṛṣṇa, who was yearning for Vraja. This is according to the principle that without separation, meeting is not nourished.

[17] When all heard about this description, in the morning the people of Vraja, headed by Nanda, who was shining in the assembly in which Kṛṣṇa was present as on other days, asked the two boys to elaborate on Kṛṣṇa going to Mathurā and other subjects.

Though a wound dries up, on remembering it, one suffers intensely. Similarly on hearing of one's own extensive suffering, the pain becomes agonizing and one cannot get rid of it. ||5||

Even on meeting a friend after a long time, the unhappiness does not leave. Even if the lover embraces his neck, he cannot forget the sorrow. Thus the gentle people of Vraja did not describe these events themselves. Kṛṣṇa made the two reciters describe these events in the assembly. ||6||

[18] When the people requested the two boys to speak, the two were overcome with happiness and sorrow. Just as Kuśa and Lava sang in Rāma's assembly, the two began reciting in Kṛṣṇa's assembly. First Snigdhakaṇṭha began speaking with eagerness.

[19] The auspicious invocation:

I surrender to the goddess of speech in the form of the *Bhāgavatam*, the essence of all the Vedas, by whose conclusions and *rasa* this new composition will attain authority. ||7||

[20] The story continues from the *Pūrva-campū:*

As the cool rays of the moon rejoice at the waxing phase of the moon and the waxing phase rejoices at the cool rays, the people of Vraja rejoiced because of Kṛṣṇa and Kṛṣṇa rejoiced because of them. ||8||

As much as the people desired to satisfy Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa desired to satisfy them. There was no difference in this. Concerning non-difference, the wise give an example of a *jīva* naturally endowed with intelligence and other qualities. ||9||

As water satisfies the thirsty person, food satisfies the hungry person, winter satisfies the hot person and heat satisfies the cold person, Kṛṣṇa satisfied the people of Vraja and was eager to please them. ||10||

Kṛṣṇa resided simultaneously in the hearts of his father, his father's brothers and sisters and the sisters' husbands and those sisters' brothers-in-law, and in the hearts of the chief sisters of his mother and father, and they resided in his heart. He resided in them all according to the Upaniṣad's statement, "Vāsudeva is everything." ||11||

The sapphire worships the beauty of his limbs and the essence of beauty of the autumn lotus is conquered by his eyes. Carrying the sweet joy of his mother and father, should he not permeate everyone's intelligence? ||12||

Filled with the bliss of caring for Kṛṣṇa, like the turtle by thought, the fish by glancing, the cow by smelling, and the bird by touch, Nanda and Yaśodā became stunned with waves of longing arising from desires which increased over time and which culminated fully during his *kaiśora* period. ||13||

Balarāma was so pleased every day with the affection that Kṛṣṇa showed for him, that people thought that Balarāma, out of love, was spreading himself out like Śeṣa as Kṛṣṇa's bed. ||14||

Kṛṣṇa in relation to his friends like Śrīdāma was like the chief life air in relation to the other bodily airs. Always acting as one, they performed all their actions for one purpose—pleasing him. ||15||

Served by his friends, Kṛṣṇa was a likeness of the life air of these boys who had bodies similar to his, for they could not exist without him or without service to him and he had given himself to them. This is the example that a wise person gives. ||16||

If the fragrance of Kṛṣṇa's limbs, satisfying to the nose, spreads in the calves, cow pens and forests, all the herds become sleepy by that. Otherwise they are alert. ||17||

Who in this universe will not have faith in him when the forest creatures become obedient and the inimical animals become friends because of his qualities? If this is so, Śukadeva should describe this in his work called *Śrīmad-bhāgavatam* in bold script, but not before Kṛṣṇa's birth. ||18||

Though there was bliss in Vraja, fear constantly arose because of various emissaries such as Pūtanā sent by Kaṃsa for harassing Kṛṣṇa. Therefore there was no peace there. Understanding this, one desires to describe in Vraja constantly the pastimes which destroy the fear in the heart. ||19||

[21] Snigdhakaṇṭha spoke to Nanda who was remembering the suffering in order to console him.

Kṛṣṇa the ornament of his family, the cause of your anxiety in Gokula, destroys all fears and comes to your lap again. ||20||

[22] In this way the discussion proceeded in the morning in Nanda's assembly. In a separate place some distance away, Yaśodā, Rādhā and other women listened to every syllable uttered nearby.

[23] As previously, with Kṛṣṇa present in Rādhā's beautiful house at the end of night, the rest of the story was concluded (by attainment of their conjugal pastimes).

[24] Snigdhakaṇṭha spoke concerning this:

How can I describe the happiness that the *gopīs* attained after controlling Kṛṣṇa whom Lakṣmī, though residing on his chest as a golden line after austerities, could not attain for festivals like *rāsa-līlā*? ||21||

The *gopīs* possess completely the happiness of the *rāsa* and other festivals, which Lakṣmī cannot attain even in her dreams. How amazing! How can I describe the happiness of Rādhā, which controls Kṛṣṇa, which the *gopīs,* though desiring, cannot attain? ||22||

[25] Remembering the separation and becoming heated, Snigdhakaṇṭha remained silent. Then he again spoke:

O my brother Madhukaṇṭha! I cannot describe freely this topic of separation.

When the *gopīs* were restrained by their praiseworthy family members and their nature became fixed, the pain arising from their love for Kṛṣṇa, making them most unstable, and causing them to reject all shame, completely bewilders my mind. ||23||

[26] Looking at Rādhā's face full of tears, he spoke:

"Just as the sun stones hold the rays of the sun within themselves, and the moonstones hold the rays of the moon within themselves, Rādhā becomes either flaming or liquid on just thinking of Kṛṣṇa. She bewilders my mind." ||24||

[27] He then returned to the topic:

When he saw the *gopīs,* he gave them a *sphūrti* of himself, not a direct encounter. When he touched them he gave them a similar *sphūrti,* not a direct embrace. The *gopīs'* perplexity breaks my heart. ||25||

When Rādhā experienced this perplexity and secretly laughed in joy or cried in pain, at her laugh the whole universe became extremely joyful and at her crying it became depressed. ||26||

When the pastimes with Kṛṣṇa and the bliss of the *rāsa* dance arrived, the *gopīs* attained the highest happiness. Their experience of great suffering caused by separation, which sometimes appeared and disappeared, agitates my heart continually. ||27||

Among all the *gopīs* Kṛṣṇa has most affection for Rādhā since he previously kept her in his heart in an unusual way. "O Lord! Oh! O most dear one!" These few words of

the *gopīs* in separation have destroyed all my happiness. What should I say? What should I do? ||28||

My mind burns on remembering how the shy women manifested their love for Kṛṣṇa. But enough of this topic! Rādhā, casting her glances to the place where she thinks will Kṛṣṇa appear, burns me up. ||29||

The *gopīs* would continually see Kṛṣṇa in other objects, speak of Kṛṣṇa in other speeches, and hear about Kṛṣṇa in other statements. Rādhā however did not become completely stunned, for the symptoms were strongly hidden. ||30||

[28] The manifestation of Kṛṣṇa's *prema* should be mentioned:

He who controls one Lakṣmī controls all happiness. Kṛṣṇa, controlling billions of Lakṣmīs, should therefore manifest billions of types of happiness. ||31||

[29] People see this however as having an appearance of suffering, depending on the particulars of *rasa* in pastimes.

Kṛṣṇa becomes pale when the *gopīs* fade, and rejoices when they are happy just as compassionate people feel success in others' successes and loss in their losses. ||32||

Because of his profound nature, Kṛṣṇa did not become thin, just as the ocean does not have more or less water in spite of the inflow from rivers. But it was noticed that the women who had love for him became thin because of separation. ||33||

Though Kṛṣṇa on attaining the *gopīs* did not become independent (making them obediently serve him), he felt himself successful, thinking that he was their lover. ||34||

What to speak of the women going for the appointment at the designated place, their independent nature (making him serve them) gave Kṛṣṇa joy. ||35||

As Indra was anxious to regain the wealth stolen by Bali, Kṛṣṇa always thought of Rādhā who was like *cintāmaṇi* among the *gopīs.* ||36||

When Kṛṣṇa saw the *gopīs,* the blinking of the eye was like a *kalpa,* and the eyelashes were like immovable mountains and tears formed oceans. One could not tell if the women caused this condition in him or he caused it in them. ||37||

“Has my *sphūrti* met with my beloved or have I directly met her?” In this way his intelligence was baffled, for when he showed a *sphūrti,* his body would burn within and when he showed himself directly all his limbs would blossom with joy. Thus at every instant he was confused. ||38||

[30] Situations of grief which were described turned into descriptions of the extreme opposite—they transformed into situations of intense joy, just as one overcomes great obstacles to attain an inaccessible well in the desert.

[31] One cannot say that in describing all pastimes one will achieve happiness. Look! Look! In seeing the unrestricted association of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa during their *kaiśora* age that happiness is achieved, for one can describe it to some degree.

[32 - 33] This is described as follows. The full manifestation of *kaiśora* appeared quickly with arousal of *mahābhāva* which bewildered Kṛṣṇa and the *gopīs.*

The *kaiśora* age of Kṛṣṇa:

I worship Govinda in his *kaiśora* form, like the moon, who was born from the milk ocean of Nanda, who shines brightly with all good qualities, but radiates black complexion, whose long eyes by their brilliance defeat the lotuses, whose beauty gives life to the *cakora* bird eyes of the *gopīs,* and whose form stimulates love. ||39||

[34] The *kaiśora* age of the *gopīs:*

The *kaiśora* age of the *gopīs,* like the full moon night, full of its digits, beautiful with lotus eyes blossoming in the moon of their faces, whose cheeks had become pale like the full moon, whose breasts shone like brilliant groves of lotus buds, whose high hips shone like fresh, praiseworthy river banks, became visible to Kṛṣṇa's eyes. ||40||

[35] Their two *anurāgas,* like two moons, completely full in all respects, spread their influence everywhere in the oceans of *kaiśora.* At that time, the words of Garga forbidding the *gopīs'* marriage to Kṛṣṇa produced great consternation in all the people.

[36 - 37] If Kṛṣṇa were to marry them, this would later create great confusion in Gokula when he left for Mathurā. Garga's words forbade the mothers and fathers giving their daughters in marriage to Kṛṣṇa.

[38] At that time, Yogamāyā who serves Kṛṣṇa, hiding her identity as Paurṇamāsī, performer of great austerities, seeing no alternative, arranged for the marriage of the *gopīs* using false forms, since all experiences would actually be false, like dream experiences in relation to waking up. Therefore the *gopīs'* association with those husbands was false. Śukadeva has hinted at this:

The cowherd men, bewildered by Kṛṣṇa's illusory potency, thought their wives had remained home at their sides. Thus they did not harbor any jealous feelings against him. SB 10.33.37

[39] When this happened, Kṛṣṇa and the *gopīs,* with great attraction, somehow met secretly with great joy many times.

[40] After it was perceived by close associates, the elders gradually understood the relationship because of the appearance of great *anurāga.* They feared the *gopīs* must be having a relationship with Kṛṣṇa and, deciding that the *gopīs'* going to the forest was wrong, forbade them from doing so. When this happened, Kṛṣṇa approached the *brāhmaṇa* Madhumaṅgala, a very close friend fond of joking, and spoke, "Why have I not seen Rādhā and the other women for so many days?"

[41] Madhumaṅgala said, "I think that the elders have prevented them."

[42] Kṛṣṇa said, "Oh! How did the elders hear about these secret activities?"

[43] Madhumaṅgala said, "What to speak of these women with great *anurāga,* an ordinary woman who has mental sickness has no internal or external awareness." ||41||

[44] Kṛṣṇa said, "Previously the elders prevented them from going inside or outside the town. What is different now?"

[45] Madhumaṅgala said:

Though this topic which is unfavorable for *rati* does not come from my mouth with pleasure, because of your question I will speak about it. This topic, well known by

the protectors of the families, was thus heard by me. You should see how they got scolded!

“Ah! What misfortune! What are you thinking? Why are you breathing heavily? Why are you looking at the path? Why are you looking at the face of your friend? Why are tears falling on your breast? Why are you fainting? Why are you uttering the word Kṛṣṇa quietly to your friend constantly? Why are your hairs standing on end? Why are you trembling?” ||42||

[46] When they are guarded by the protectors of the family, the *gopīs’* faces wilt. Hear in summary how they speak to their mothers.

“These guardians block my vision with their bodies. They block what I should hear, by their speech. They block me from smelling by supplying fragrant incense. How can any method cover up this condition of my mind, filled with Kṛṣṇa? O mother, why are you uselessly becoming angry with me?” ||43||

[47] When Kṛṣṇa heard Madhumaṅgala’s description, his color faded. Deliberating on the news, he dismissed Madhumaṅgala, thought for a long time, and then made a decision.

[48] “My elders have heard the gossip about my enjoying with the *gopīs.* Most of the most famous elders will hear this. How will I be delivered from this obstacle?” His mind went blank for a moment and then he thought again:

[49] As I am defamed in this way, the solution is to leave Vraja.

Where defamation is impossible to remove, the well-bred person should go far away. The defamation will

disappear with time. Time is the remedy. Therefore it is best if I reside separately from Vraja in peace. ||44||

By great misfortune there will be complete disruption of the affection of my father, mother and others in Vraja–– which is my very life. ||45||

[50] He again thought something else:

“Let the life airs leave the body, and let the body leave the life airs. But how can I give up all the *gopīs* who are like all my life airs?” ||46||

[51] He thought in another way:

A man and woman cannot bear separation in the same house, but can bear it by being distant from each other. ||47||

[52] But ah! O Rādhā, giving fame to Vṛṣabhānu and Kīrtidā! From birth you thought only of me! From infancy you gave joy to all by your tender body, words and mind. You will be completely disturbed by the intense fire of separation from me. You have burned in grief by not meeting with me or meeting with me for a short time, since nothing else could be done. O beloved! Though I am your faithful lover, how will you live, when I, full of cruelty, desire to give you up? O Rādhikā, complete in all happiness! Where will you go in your after life?

[53] Meeting Madhumaṅgala, he informed him of the inauspicious situation.

The elders understood the situation in locking up Rādhā and the other *gopīs,* because the guards surrounded them on all sides. ||48||

[54] Since it was impossible for Kṛṣṇa to attain the *gopīs* by his present incomplete thoughts, Kṛṣṇa, filled with

longing, spent the night playing with his friends. Why dwell on things which trouble the heart?

[55] Saying this, the reciter concluded:

O Rādhikā! It was not proper that I spoke unpleasant topics. I am eager to speak of the wealth of *prema* possessed by you two. ||49||

Previously I spoke of topics which would produce *rāga f*or Kṛṣṇa. Look! The lord of your life desires your mercy. ||50||

[56] When the reciter had reached this point in the story and concluded, and had made them accept that nothing of those pastimes remained to be told, they returned to their houses in bliss. Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa went to their own sleeping room with joyous desire.

Chapter Two

Cruelty of Akrūra

[1] At dawn the next day the narration began in the assembly in the presence of the people of Vraja and Nanda.

[2] Madhukaṇṭha said: On the dawn of the day of killing Keśi, Kṛṣṇa for a moment with restless eyes began thinking.

[3] “Ah! This dream in which I drag Kaṃsa from the stage was like actually seeing the event. It will happen soon. Today, Keśi intent on killing me will be killed. Kaṃsa will be killed after that. And for that purpose I will go to Mathurā. It is time that I go there. It is understood that out of fear he will not come here. Without the killing of Kaṃsa, who constantly afflicts the Vṛṣṇis now and has sent rascals to kill me, my parents in Mathurā and Vraja will be filled with fear.

[4] Again he thought: “Oh! Oh! If I delay in doing this, I think it will not be auspicious for the lives of my mother and father––If I leave them and go, I will become insane due to the disturbance by my internal wind––like moon pushed by the zodiac movements, cloud pushed by the wind and sun pushed by the zodiac movements. I am the moon for the *cakora* eyes of my mothers who derives nectar from my face. I am the cloud for the *cātaka* eyes of my father who subsists on me, and I am the sun for the people of Gokula, who blossom like lotuses.” ||1||

[5] While Kṛṣṇa lay on his bed, lamenting for a long time, Keśi approached. The previous *campū* was completed with the description of Keśi's death.

[6] Protected by Yaśodā and increasing his fame on the pretext of herding cows, Kṛṣṇa met Nārada in private. Nārada consoled Kṛṣṇa, full of doubt and regret, by relating to him his previous and future pastimes while considering all the implications.

[7] The protector of all auspiciousness then dispatched Nārada and returned to Vraja with the cows, still disturbed, but playing with his friends with a happy face.

The *devatās* worshiped him with garlands made of heavenly flowers. A crowd of *brāhmaṇas* praised him with Vedic verses. He faced the cows and cowherd boys, calling them by their names. He gave happiness to all by the effulgence of his body. ||2||

[8] The *devatās* spoke:

By the appearance of the moon, the night lotuses immediately blossoms, the ocean becomes agitated and *cakora* birds drink its beauty from afar. Look! The cowherds, seeing Kṛṣṇa, attain those conditions unlimitedly with bliss, but also run to him with all their strength because of their desire. ||3||

When he returned home after killing Keśi, his body appeared differently to each person. He was a form of strength to the cowherds like Dāma that he doted on. He was the essence of the heart to the cowherds who served him such as Śrīdāma. He was the life air shining in the heart of his parents. He was the *ātmā* of the *gopīs.* ||4||

After killing Keśi, when he came amongst the people of Vraja, who were clamoring blissfully, his mother touched

all parts of his body with her hands and Nanda shed tears. All others' hairs stood on end. The other symptoms cannot be described in words. ||5||

[9] In the morning his parents made him rest for a few moments, caring for him without observing him in detail because of their confusion caused by the incomparable danger. They embraced him as no others could, put him in the house, smothered him with affection, bathed him, dressed him attractively, and applied ointments on him.

[10] Because they thought his body was soft, they considered that at the time of fighting demons he had become endowed with Nārāyaṇa's power temporarily.

[11] It is time for milking the cows! Gopāla, protector of all happiness, along with Balarāma called the group of servants holding the implements and went to a place to face the cows. On arriving there, his black limbs shone along with Balarāma.

The cows immediately surrounded him, while their mooing drowned out all other sounds. Along with Balarāma, affectionate Kṛṣṇa had calves meet the cows, who were flowing abundantly with milk even without their calves. ||6||

As previously Kṛṣṇa finished all his chores. Though his mind was disturbed by Nārada's words, by deciding to return to Vraja after leaving, he became steady. ||7||

[12] Many thoughts came in his mind:

"I will go off to kill Kaṃsa but the love for my parents is the greatest obstacle. But Nārada's words are also not untruthful. How will I tolerate the grief of separation in Vraja? Though I can conclude in this way, what is the use of these bad thoughts full of sorrow? But it is necessary

to remember the great happiness of meeting again in Vraja.” ||8||

While thinking in this way, he saw some chariot, for whatever is reflected in the hearts of great souls becomes reality. ||9||

[13] Seeing the person riding on the chariot, he began to think:

“If he is without weapons, he must be a messenger.” Many people began to wonder why this person had come from Kaṃsa. ||10||

[14] The sun, coloring the west red, falling low and heating the ocean water, hid him and the world in darkness.

The sun would certainly rise after four *praharas.* But Kṛṣṇa with Balarāma destroyed the darkness by spreading their effulgence. ||11||

[15] Though not able to recognize Akrūra from a distance, Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma knew him. When the cowherds went to see the chariot and all the cows pricked up their ears, Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma desired to see the chariot also.

They went because it is stated that the eye alone gives knowledge of the form. According to the realization of great souls, the power of sight then attracts the ears. (They wanted to question him.) ||12||

The two had such beauty that, on seeing them, the sapphire and the moon desired their beauty. But let that be! When Akrūra from far away saw just their foot prints, attractive as painted pictures, he became completely bewildered. ||13||

[16] Akrūra began to describe their beauty:

Kṛṣṇa is the *avatāra* of the presiding deity of the wealth of all black luster. Balarāma is the full essence of perfect beauty of pure whiteness. Kṛṣṇa is beautiful with cloth the color of Pārvatī. Balarāma spreads remarkable beauty with his pleasing dark-blue cloth mixed with gold like Kṛṣṇa's cloth. ||14||

The beauty of Kṛṣṇa's face spreads bliss by conquering a blue lotus. The beauty of Balarāma's face defeats the white lotus. The beauty of Kṛṣṇa's eyes defeats the attractive *khañjana* bird. The tips of Balarāma's eyes defeat piles of red lotuses. ||15||

Kṛṣṇa's cheeks are illuminated by the joyful light from the *makara* heads on his earrings. Balarāma continually shines with the rays from his one earring. Kṛṣṇa's nose is like an arrow made of a sesame flower placed between his bow-like brows. Balarāma occupies the heart of shining Cupid, having conquered him with his beauty, similar to Kṛṣṇa's. ||16||

Kṛṣṇa is attractive with sparkling jewels on his snake-like arms shining like sapphires. Balarāma is attractive with arms superior to ruby pillars. Kṛṣṇa's chest increases in beauty by the golden line on his chest made of blue testing stone. Balarāma's chest conquers the beauty of a jewel mine on Mount Kailāsa. ||17||

Kṛṣṇa has a variety of treasures increased by the praise of poets, including the beauty of his lips, among his various limbs. Balarāma's constant beauty, similar to Kṛṣṇa's, is also praised by poets. Kṛṣṇa walks by his feet which surpass lotuses to show the excellence of the royal palace. Balarāma moves his fear-inspiring feet to assist Kṛṣṇa's feet. ||18||

Kṛṣṇa plays marvelously with his hands, black and tender as creepers. Balarāma uses a branch as a bat to hit a ball. Kṛṣṇa in modesty hides his beauty with the cloth covering his body. Balarāma, similar to Kṛṣṇa, watches for the time when they should return to Vraja. ||19||

Akrūra saw Balarāma and Kṛṣṇa as two young elephants among the calves. One had blue cloth and the other had cloth yellow like lightning. Kṛṣṇa had earrings and Balarāma had an ornament in his left ear. One was named Balarāma, giving happiness to Rohiṇī who came in a great dynasty. The other was excellent in giving happiness to the most splendid cows. They were both attracted to playing with the cows. They exerted power as cowherds, rejecting birth in other families. ||20||

Balarāma and Kṛṣṇa, wearing blue and gold cloth, with horn and flute on their waists, and silk ropes and sticks in their hands, attracted Akrūra's mind. ||21||

[17 - 18] As soon as he saw the two boys, which made his journey successful, he jumped down from his chariot, while his hairs stood on end like spikes and he shook to the extreme. He spread his limbs on the ground to offer respects. He offered respects three, six and twelve times even though he was their uncle, since he was completely bewildered.

He did this because one should honor or ignore a person by understanding the person's power. Otherwise one will think in terms of one's own identity. ||22||

[19 - 20] When Akrūra offered unlimited respects, after instructing his friends to gather the remaining cows and take them home for milking, Kṛṣṇa, firm as a lion, with great mercy approached along with Balarāma and raised

Akrūra up with his two spread arms. Akrūra, with choked voice, could not even utter his name.

[21 - 22] When all the cowherd boys were introduced to Akrūra, the two boys, pained by Akrūra's confusion, forgot to treat him as an uncle and respected him by embracing him. Taking his hands in theirs, they led him to their house. Kṛṣṇa, acting properly, put Balarāma in front.

[23] After welcoming him as the first part of treatment of a guest, Kṛṣṇa along with Balarāma fed him delicious food. After the meal, Kṛṣṇa happily offered him spices to purify his mouth. They then had him meet Nanda.

Meeting respectful Akrūra, Nanda remembered the suffering caused by Kaṃsa, and, praising Akrūra's qualities, removed all that suffering by his blessings. Though Akrūra and Vasudeva were gentle, on remembering the cruelty of Kaṃsa my mind becomes disturbed and even now burns to ashes. ||23||

[24] Nanda prepared a room for him to rest in. Seating Akrūra, Nanda worshiped and satisfied him. When Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma had finished the meal made by their mothers, they met Akrūra privately. On seeing Akrūra, Kṛṣṇa awakened his desire to kill Kaṃsa and questioned Akrūra on this topic. The sweetness of those skillful questions yields all happiness.

"O gentle uncle! Did you come comfortably? How can you be happy in Mathurā when Kaṃsa has not been killed for so long? How are my mother and father living? What is the purpose of your auspicious coming?" ||24||

[25] Akrūra said, "You must have heard of Kaṃsa's oppression of the Yadu warriors. Starting from the day after the marriage of Devakī, he remains obsessed with

hearing your name. Other relatives and I remain in Mathurā like pillars of *dūrvā* grass on the path. Vasudeva's brother Devabhāga has a son named Uddhava, who is most pure. In separation from you he suffers from madness."

[26] Kṛṣṇa said, "This I know. Now however describe this in detail."

[27] Looking in all directions, Akrūra then spoke in a quiet voice.

[28] "Nārada bestows the best victory to people like you and gives liberation to persons like Kaṃsa. In order to create enthusiasm to fight between you and fearful Kaṃsa, he hinted that you two as Devakī's seventh and eighth child would be dangerous. Devakī's child was placed in Rohiṇī by Yogamāyā. Knowing that *māyā* had been born to Yaśodā, Vasudeva placed you in Yaśodā's lap and made *māyā* appear to be Devakī's son."

[29] Kṛṣṇa said, "This is astonishing to me."

[30] Akrūra said, "Hearing this from the mouth of Vasudeva, I make my ears successful."

[31] Looking as if surprised, Kṛṣṇa then thought to himself:

Yes, yes! Though I have no lapse of knowledge, this did not come to my awareness because of my affection for the people of Vraja. But now it manifests like a forgotten dream, for a certain purpose. "For this son of yours there are many forms and names according to his transcendental qualities and activities. ...For many reasons, this beautiful son of yours sometimes appeared previously as the son of Vasudeva. Therefore, those who are learned sometimes call this child Vāsudeva." (SB

10.8.15,14) Garga spoke these conclusive words to my father, the protector of Vraja, but all the people of Vraja do not know this.

[32] This is because Yogamāyā dwelled in the womb of Yaśodā and with Yogamāyā I appeared with two arms in the lotus of her heart. I also arose from the heart to Devakī with four arms. Later when Devakī prayed that I cover those four arms, I appeared with two arms so that no one would know about that form. It was thus understood that I was born from Yaśodā with two arms. Let that be. Vasudeva is my uncle since I am born from Nanda's family with two arms, but Vasudeva is my father as I was born from him with four arms. Thus I will deliver Vasudeva and Devakī.

[33] Kṛṣṇa then spoke aloud, "Then what happened?"

[34] Akrūra said, "Kaṃsa wanted to kill Vasudeva but Nārada pacified him with comforting words, and after bewildering him left. Unrestrained, Kaṃsa then bound your mother and father in iron chains."

[35] The two brothers listened with tears in their eyes: "Did you come to give us news of our parents?"

[36] Akrūra said in shame:

No, no. But they must endure the torture inflicted by Kaṃsa. I am telling you something you have not heard.

You two were born as their sons and this is quite fitting, for what son would not desire to rid his parents of suffering? ||25||

[37] Kṛṣṇa, hiding the agitation in his heart, said with disregard, "What did Kaṃsa say?"

[38] Akrūra said, "There are some praiseworthy items in his speech. Please hear what he said. He has sent me to

invite you two, surrounded by your relatives, like other citizens, to see the festival involving Śiva's bow, along with his assembly."

[39] Balarāma said with a smile, "The mad elephants bellow when the lion's hunger increases."

[40] Kṛṣṇa said, "Let that be. We will meet Kaṃsa and satisfy Śiva by making offerings. When will this festival for Śiva take place?"

[41] Akrūra said, "On the fourteenth lunar day."

[42] Kṛṣṇa then asked the remaining details. "I consider this most auspicious for us since we will see our parents."

[43] Saying this and then leaving Akrūra, Kṛṣṇa with Balarāma got up and went to Nanda. Sitting with his permission, folding his hands Kṛṣṇa spoke while Nanda gazed at his face. "O father! There is some good news but everyone should hear it at the same time."

[44] Slow to act because of doubt, Nanda called Upananda and others as if cheerful. The women headed by Yaśodā were present behind a screen. When the distinguished persons were seated Kṛṣṇa spoke with a slight smile: "A pleasant order from Kaṃsa has come for us. As his citizens you, most excellent, with elders and children, should go to the festival of the bow on this occasion. Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma are eager to see Kaṃsa because of his prowess."

[45] Nanda said, "Did you consider if Balarāma, born from Vasudeva, would be pleasing to Kaṃsa?"

[46 - 47] Kṛṣṇa said with a smile, "If he is not pleased with Balarāma, his desires will be unfulfilled since who can harm me, endowed with your great strength? When I

was an infant with very little strength, I killed Pūtanā and other demons. What to speak of our strength now that we are strong! Easily we killed demons like Baka and Vatsāsura.

Baka swallowed me and no one else. Agha swallowed the calves and boys. Indra caused disturbance to all by rain. Who is Kaṃsa compared to them?" ||26||

[48] Hearing this and speaking to each other, they all lost awareness and the women's senses stopped functioning. He then spoke again, "Since we are happy with millions of cows, we do not need to go anywhere else. But if we do not obey the king's order then he will come and create fear here, what to speak of being proper. If we go without hesitation Kaṃsa will be peaceful."

Hearing this Nanda spoke to Upananda, who had turned pale: "What should we do?"

[49] Upananda said, "Your child had correctly said that we should go there. If we do not go, Kaṃsa's anger and our fear will increase. But if we go, there will be no anger or fear. Remarkable fate protected us previously. It will deliver us from the present calamities."

[50] When the cowherds were considering in this way powerful Paurṇamāsī suddenly appeared.

[51] When asked by Nanda, she said with affection, "Your going to Mathurā will bring bliss to all. Kaṃsa and all his cruel cohorts will be destroyed. But I see that Kṛṣṇa's return will be delayed. Therefore decide what should be done."

[52] Upananda said, "If the enemies are killed then returning without delay is best. It seems best to go." Not

seeing any alternative, they all agreed with this. Without any trace of sorrow, seeing the face of Kṛṣṇa, he then asked, “When should we go there?”

[53] Kṛṣṇa said, “I think that we should go on the morning of the thirteenth lunar day. He will celebrate the festival on the fourteenth day.”

[54] When they observed that Nanda behaved as if he had sorrow within, all the people said, “Let there be an announcement immediately in Vraja so that the cowherds can gather at Nanda’s residence with all the gifts.”

[55] Nanda then said to the assembly, “By the consent of Paurṇamāsī and you everything will be auspicious. The cowherds who can be given orders should be instructed to bring gifts.”

[56] The lord of Vṛndāvana, gaining permission in this way, then gave the order to his followers, “Say this to the gate keepers in a loud voice.”

[57] Yaśodā, on understanding this, lost consciousness and could not speak. Madhukaṇṭha, on saying this, also could not speak.

[58] When Nanda and the assembly who had gathered for the recitation also fainted like Yaśodā, Kṛṣṇa took Nanda’s lotus feet and spoke to revive him. “O father! Why are you grieving? As previously this is simply a recitation. I will kill Kaṃsa while joyfully thinking of you and return after some time and be visible to you.”

[59] With hairs standing on end Nanda put Kṛṣṇa on his lap and all felt deep bliss. When all was peaceful, Madhukaṇṭha spoke:

“O Yaśodā! Let your child play here or in any place. Look! Merciful to his devotees, he is controlled by you.” ||27||

[60] In the evening assembly, when Kṛṣṇa appeared in Rādhā’s company, Madhukaṇṭha with choked voice spoke:

O Rādhā now tormented by separation from Mādhava! Listen to the previous news.

When Kṛṣṇa went to Mathurā, the announcement was like a thunderbolt in Vraja. Some *gopīs* were injured by it and Rādhā and others almost died. ||28||

[61] The faces of some *gopīs* withered from the announcement, like sparks from a fire. Some *gopīs’* limbs became wasted, their hair and ornaments fell off, and they became senseless. Some lost consciousness. Who can describe them, suffering as they did within their hearts? Who can describe them with indifference? They become either stunned by the description or are simply dull-witted. ||29||

That announcement made the *gopīs* faint in the evening and it revived them in the morning. For a body afflicted with burns, fire is the cure and for a body infected with poison, poison is the best medicine. ||30||

[62] When the *gopīs* regained consciousness and became anxious about Kaṃsa, which then caused fear, another item appeared in their consciousness, produced by the *devatās* for protection, which was activated by the powers of Kṛṣṇa and confirmed previously by Paurṇamāsī.

There was not a trace of doubt: Kṛṣṇa, who destroyed Agha, Kāliya, Keśi and Ariṣṭa, would also kill Kaṃsa. ||31||

[63] Having that faith, they thought about what the world had approved.

When Kṛṣṇa succeeds in killing Kaṃsa we fear that our interests will also be destroyed. When he resides in Mathurā, how can he reside in Vraja? ||32||

All of us daughters of cowherds are village girls. In Mathurā there are many princesses. He will be attracted to their qualities. How will he remember us in his heart? ||33||

When he goes to the forest, one moment becomes like a *kalpa.* If he goes to Mathurā, only our minds will know the difficulties we will undergo and no one else. If he is going to Mathurā to gain a kingdom, how will we be able to remain peaceful? ||34||

Our type of *rāga* is not attractive to him. His kingdom does not give us happiness. But our *anurāga* constantly desires to serve this beloved in a solitary place. As the fish fears separation from water, the soul fears separation from the nectar of seeing him when he leaves. Even before going, our souls, dried up, can recognize what is best. We will recognize nothing at all. ||35||

His face is attractive with a sweet smile. The tips of his eyes playfully dance. His clever words give joy to the heart. He is filled with pastimes. Having directly seen all of this, one cannot make any comparisons. If the disturbed mind can tolerate the pain of separation, it can take poison to be nectar. ||36||

[64] Afflicted with these thoughts, the *gopīs* gave up fear of criticism and approached Kṛṣṇa as he prepared to go to Mathurā. The description of the journey will be told in the next morning session.

[65] Saying this, Madhukaṇṭha saw that Kṛṣṇa had become stunned with unconsciousness and Rādhā had fainted. He quickly spoke:

“O Rādhā! This is a previous story. It is not happening now. Look! Seeing your faded face, Kṛṣṇa has also faded in complexion.” ||37||

[66] Just as food should be served when people are hungry and then they become happy, so the two reciters, after serving the tasty topics and making all happy, went to their residence. Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa went to their house of enchantment.

Chapter Three

Going to Mathurā

[1] Snigdhakaṇṭha spoke in Nanda’s morning gathering illuminated by Kṛṣṇa:

O Nanda shining in the effulgence of Kṛṣṇa’s attractive face! I will now continue the story.

[2] In the remaining portion of the night, filled with the journey’s preparations which were assigned to different assistants, Balarāma composed a poem about Kṛṣṇa’s actions such as killing Pūtanā. Reciters spoke these verses loudly, giving enthusiasm to all by their attractive nature. What to speak of others, Nanda and his wife, the best among the blissful, distributed abundant wealth to the reciters, thinking that the killing of Kaṃsa had already been accomplished.

Rohiṇī, in the same condition as Yaśodā, will not be described separately. In describing an object, describing its reflection becomes redundant. ||1||

[3] When the auspicious time for departure arrived, all the friends gathered. Nanda and Yaśodā felt completely disturbed by the pain caused by the advice to go to Mathurā. The best astrologers knowledgeable of auspicious and inauspicious times arrived at their door and announced their arrival through attractive messengers.

[4] The two met the astrologers in the inner chambers. With necessary gifts in their hands, they made an oath

and then asked questions in a covered way: “Since you know everything, what do you think of the situation?”

[5] The messengers said: Why do you ask about this very happy occasion in private? This should be honored by all people.

O Nanda and Yaśodā! Do not fear. Your son will definitely kill Kaṃsa and will become the husband of Lakṣmī who rules the three worlds. Your undying fame will make the mouths of the people of the three worlds dance. The four Vedas, Mahābhārata and Pañcarātra scriptures will be the witnesses. ||2||

[6] They worshiped the astrologers profusely and, fixing happiness in their hearts, then meditated on the feet of Nārāyaṇa with sincerity. Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma, surrounded by friends, finished their morning duties and, giving fear to the demons, came to the assembly with their friends.

[7] Arriving there, they offered respects to the lotus feet of Nanda, Yaśodā and Rohiṇī. Shedding tears for a long time to praise the contact with their parents lap, they remained there. All the confidential devotees, one, two or hundreds at a time, emanating waves of respect, then entered the inner chambers.

[8] When Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma sat among the auspicious pots and joyful lamps with tear-filled eyes and smiling lotus faces and all the others stood there with little discrimination, cruel Akrūra spoke from the road, “The auspicious time has arrived. Why do you not start the journey?”

[9] Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma, best of the brave, eager to kill Kaṃsa, offered respects to the feet of their father and mother who were seated motionless as pictures and

spoke sweetly to dissipate their sorrow and create bliss. Receiving permission and blessing, from choked voices and a wealth of joy, they moved their lotus feet to depart. The continuous sounds of groups of attractive pairs of drums, merging with the bliss, appeared most attractive.

[10] People praise Kṛṣṇa as follows:

When Kṛṣṇa left his house to kill Kaṃsa the *devatās* began to play hundreds of drums. Though their mother and father's hearts were full of worry, not speaking of other topics, the two boys became pleased, causing all auspicious bliss. ||3||

[11 - 12] As the two boys approached the chariot, the chanting of the Vedas increased the auspiciousness of their journey, but all of Gokula was in confusion. Nanda was in one place and his wife was in another. When Kṛṣṇa folded his hands to offer praise in order to beg permission to depart, everyone said:

We should go with you, who make us remember your childhood pastimes.

O killer of Baka! Your mother maintains her life like a bellows (breathing but unconscious) and your father is in the same condition. What can I say? All of Gokula is the same, since you reside in the hearts of all residents at all times. Without your presence, what use are the houses, wealth, bodies and life airs of the living beings of Gokula? ||4||

[13] When the assembly of cowherds, in tears, became stunned, Kṛṣṇa, knowing their sorrow, spoke:

You are my friends dearer than my life, on whose behalf I took the forest fire to be like sugar water and the mountain to be like a toy ball. Though these things

should not be spoken, seeing your grief I will speak now just as I did previously. ||5||

My father who is the life of my mother, and the children of the people of Vraja who are my soul and most dear to me, should go with me. Those who remain here should serve my mother and the cows, and thus maintain my life. ||6||

[14] Let the two elder brothers of Nanda remain in Vraja to manage. The two younger brothers, Nanda's second forms, should go with me.

[15] While suitable people were engaged here and there, the permission was granted from his mother, Nanda's brothers' wives, and from his brothers and their sons, but the details of this description are not mentioned as they are not pertinent.

[16 - 17] But there was no possibility of returning quickly unless Kaṃsa was quickly killed. Lamenting about this, the reciter went beyond his nature as a reciter. Finishing the topic Snigdhakaṇṭha spoke again.

You should understand that what I am repeating is old news, for the killer of demons is now sitting on your lap. ||7||

[18] Hearing this pleasant talk of what was to come, Nanda embraced Kṛṣṇa, soaking him with his tears. Seeing this, all went to their assigned places in bliss. Yaśodā called Kṛṣṇa through personal servants and again embraced him as if for the first time.

[19] When the evening recitation (among the *gopīs)* had well begun, Snigdhakaṇṭha spoke to Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa:

O most excellent Rādhā! You are always with Kṛṣṇa. Your *khañjana* bird eyes dance in the effulgence of

Kṛṣṇa's beauty. Please hear this old story again. To describe the *gopīs* going to Kṛṣṇa's chariot with their followers is beyond my intelligence. How can I describe this?

"See the foolishness, the mercilessness, the cruelty of the creator––taking away Kṛṣṇa and going to Mathurā–– in the form of Akrūra, who destroys everyone's intelligence and creates (so-called) auspiciousness with this ill omen." Though the *gopīs* were sober they went to the assembly with these agitated words. Their confused condition burns me up. ||8||

"One should not criticize the creator for he is not our relative. For the same reason, it is useless to criticize Akrūra. We should criticize Kṛṣṇa, lord of our life, who is going way." Remembering today all the fire of lamentation in the wounded hearts of the tender *gopīs,* my heart burns in pain. ||9||

"I think that his going to Mathurā is preferable to the auspicious praises uttered by the women of Mathurā on seeing Kṛṣṇa in the future." I am consumed in fire on thinking of the desires of these tender *gopīs* filled with shame, seeing themselves without Kṛṣṇa. ||10||

The *gopīs* were not pleased when Kṛṣṇa went to Mathurā. His mounting the chariot was like a thunderbolt striking their heads. Thus they criticized the assembly of Nanda in loud voices. This topic gives great sorrow to my heart even today. ||11||

"O *prāṇa-sakhīs*! Come to the road. Millions of us will approach the chariot and pull him off. What can the elders do to us?" The tender *gopīs* came close to Kṛṣṇa with this hard mood and the elders criticized. This destroys my life with force. ||12||

“Where has the *rāsa* arena gone, ornamented with the sprouts of the desire creepers of pastimes, the *gopīs,* who were thrilled with joy on meeting him? Our assembly members initiated by the king of cheaters, Akrūra, as his obedient disciples, have destroyed all the pastimes.” Scolding in this way, the *gopīs* scorch my heart. ||13||

“So much for the *rāsa* dance! In the evening and morning, going with the cows and Balarāma, Kṛṣṇa nourished us with his many playful glances. Will the cowherd boys take us quickly to some suitable place?” The words of the *gopīs* cause me pain. ||14||

[20] When Rādhā fainted, Kṛṣṇa appeared in her heart. Like a charioteer wandering around on his chariot, fearing great agitation, Kṛṣṇa withdrew his glance from Rādhā. But Rādhā saw Kṛṣṇa everywhere. ||15||

Gathering together they wept, calling, “Govinda, Dāmodara, Mādhava!” Remembering their weeping, I am overcome with lamentation, and want to give up my life. ||16||

As the *gopīs* wept, the torturer, cruel-minded Akrūra, took Kṛṣṇa far away, to where the Yamunā flows. ||17||

With fixed eyes, they saw Kṛṣṇa, then the chief cowherds, the accompanying chariots, the flags, and then the clouds of dust rising in the sky. The *gopīs,* losing hope that he would return, would give up their lives. But he would not make this happen if he would write a letter stating that he would return. ||18||

Though Nārada revealed his coming to Mathurā would be delayed, Kṛṣṇa, because he was filled with strong desire, did not like that delay. ||19||

[21] Kṛṣṇa and the *gopīs* wrote letters, mixing perspiration with *kuṃkuma* and tears with collyrium. These were delivered by Madhumaṅgala who was engaged as the messenger. The letters were as follows:

Having quickly killed Kaṃsa, ruler of Mathurā, I will return. Mathurā is not far away for me, killer of demons like Vatsāsura. O beloved *gopīs*! Why are you unhappy? What you pray for, you should accomplish with pleasure. You, controllers of my life, should reveal what you are thinking to me, your very life. ||20||

You will go and kill Kaṃsa and then accept the kingdom. How will you return here? We pray that you remember us in that attractive holy place which bestows all goals. We pray that you offer three handfuls of water for our departed souls. ||21||

I have no desire for a kingdom. Even if the desire arises I swear that after killing Kaṃsa and comforting the Yadus, I will return. If a deer is caught by fate, will the pride of the hunter bring happiness to the captive deer? The forest will not be a cause of happiness, nor will the meeting with a lover in that condition. ||22||

There are plenty of delightful gardens in Mathurā and many praiseworthy princesses. They will become very dear to you. On attaining those things, how will you ever think of Vraja or us? If one attains wonderful enjoyment by hard austerities, will a person pray for living on forest fruit? ||23||

It is true that all the pleasure groves give whatever one desires. It is true that there are many princesses endowed with the best qualities. But I swear that Vṛndāvana and the girls there please me most. No

woman in the three worlds or in Mathurā pleases me as much as you. ||24||

The eyes that saw the beauty of all your limbs, sees you going far away. The ears which heard your flute hears the terrible news of your going to Mathurā. The body which enjoyed your touch now accepts separation from you. Ah! Our lives are cursed! Curse the creator! ||25||

O *prāṇa-sakhīs*! If the eye which I divert from seeing your beauty, if the ear which is far from hearing your words, if my body which does not meet you, do not follow my command for finding similar objects, how will I be able to bear my independent eye, ear and body? ||26||

In our state, Akrūra has become cruel. The creator has produced inauspiciousness. Friends act like enemies. What else can we say about this? Our lives have become forever lifeless. O Lord! With delay in time, a new sickness (death) has appeared as the remedy. ||27||

I will definitely come quickly. I have nothing else in my mind. If by fate something arises, I will never reject you who are suffering. Whatever happens to me in this situation, do not worry as you previously did because of separation. It is like a dream. ||28||

This verbal expression of pride in the Vraja women arose because of Kṛṣṇa. But the pride arising from Rādhā's silent nature is rarely seen. ||29||

The elders forcibly sent the *gopīs* to their houses. Becoming fixed in Kṛṣṇa's numerous past activities, they constantly sang of his return which he had promised. ||30||

[22] When the members of Rādhā's gathering became agitated with the story of Snigdhakaṇṭha, lotus-eyed Kṛṣṇa spoke with agitation:

"O Rādhā with beautiful eyes! Do not become absorbed in hearing this story. Oh! You think the past events are in present and do not see the present." ||31||

[23] Hearing this and seeing Kṛṣṇa's attractive face, her pain diminished. Embarrassed, she touched his lotus feet with her head and bathed those feet in abundant, cool tears flowing from her eyes.

[24] Filled completely with a river of bliss, as if attending a festival, everyone returned to their houses. Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa went to their most attractive abode.

Chapter Four

Entering Mathurā

[1] Madhukaṇṭha spoke at the morning recitation arranged by Nanda with Kṛṣṇa present.

[2] Clothed in the gaze of Nanda which gave joy, Kṛṣṇa, in anxiety on thinking of his mother, who was trying to prevent the journey, walked a quarter of a *krośa* and then asked his attendants for the best food to get relief from fatigue, in order to make his mother think of other things.

[3] While Kṛṣṇa reached the edge of Vraja, Yaśodā entered her house to concentrate on preparing the food. In passing the time in this way, her suffering dissipated.

[4] While Yaśodā and others made their carts move, Akrūra, going swiftly on a crooked route with his chariot, came to a holy place on the Yamunā named Brahma-hrada. He thought that if he went on a straight path the residents would bring the two boys back. He had to keep the boys out of sight. The residents, of simple mind, not understanding the crooked route, went south, heading in the direction of Mathurā.

[5] When Akrūra was performing his noon rituals in the Brahma-hrada, he saw the astonishing powers of the Lord which destroy *saṃsāra.* This impeded his impetuous speed. The people of Vraja wondered why he was delayed and remained for a long time on the road.

After Akrūra went into the water alone, hear in summary what Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma did after obtaining news. Who will doubt the majesty of Mathurā or the sweetness of Vraja? Remembering this, my throat becomes choked with tears. ||1||

[6] Seeing the chariot with Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma after a long time, Nanda and the others became joyful. Sitting there for a short time and instructing one another and strengthening the advice, depending on the assistance of fate, the cowherds then went to the city.

[7] Who can describe the great fortune of travelers going to the places that Kṛṣṇa visited at that time?

[8] People coming to or going from a distant city, on suddenly seeing Kṛṣṇa's lotus face, forgot what to do with their eyes and bodies. ||2||

Entering the city he first came to the place called Devī-khara. To the south lived donkeys (*khara)* and thus the place was named Khara-vāsa. Even today people going south on *parikrama* of Mathurā, keeping Devī to the south, become filled with bliss. ||3 - 4||

[9] Hearing about the attractive groves which increase all happiness, Kṛṣṇa alighted from the chariot and released the carts from the line, spreading them through the area. When he met Akrūra, he in self-interest attempted to bring Kṛṣṇa to his house. Kṛṣṇa promised that he would come there some other time when convenient and then dismissed him.

Putting Balarāma in front, with a desire to protect the righteous, he then entered the colorful town surrounded by friends while attractive instruments sounded. The town he saw seemed to be looking at him.

[10] The gates of the town appeared to be mouths. Made of crystal, the gates seemed to smile. The lattice holes seemed to be thousands of eyes for the city. When those eyes fell upon the remarkable eyes of Kṛṣṇa they seemed to stop blinking. The paved grounds were like the city's cranium. The jeweled walls covering many huge towers were the town's forehead. The many high tops of the towers were like crowns giving joy to the eyes. The hundreds of hanging decorations in front of the gate were like ointments applied to the city. Quivering in the gentle breeze they seemed to show transformations of love on obtaining a glimpse of Kṛṣṇa. The two golden door panels crafted by skilled tradesmen, filled with effulgence, were like attractive teeth of the town. The opening in the door panels was like a gaping mouth, praising Kṛṣṇa's beauty. The buildings at the crossroads made of gold and sapphires seemed to reveal the *antaḥkaraṇa* of the town with their effulgence. The rows of buildings were like crowds of people rejoicing on seeing Kṛṣṇa. The aviaries near the palace, made by the creator with astonishing heavenly gems, were like colorful ornaments decorating the town. These attractive houses near the palace filled with the cries of countless peacocks and pigeons were like the indistinct utterances of the town caused by their excitement. The silver walls were like attractive clothing on the town. With their many colors, they were like freshly washed silk. The many groves were like attendants for the houses. The fruits and flowers of the groves were like gifts held in the hands of the town.

[11] With banana trees bearing fruit, betel nut trees as well as pots full of water on every road, the town seemed to have its hairs standing on end. The water in the many

canals with clean banks was like the ecstatic perspiration of the town.

[12] When Kṛṣṇa entered the town some *devatās* who had not seen his Vraja pastimes began describing this event.

[13] Look, look! All the young women, confined in their quarters, now tolerate suffering of the hot sun to see Kṛṣṇa. Though following a vow of silence, they are giving pain to their enemies who use rough words (by their use of sweet words praising Kṛṣṇa).

[14] On the road ahead, a black moon and a white moon are shining in an astonishing manner. High up, at front of the palace, lotuses are blooming. When the women see Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma who like to play in the forest they become amazed. ||5||

O friends! Mathurā now shines like the abode of sweetness by contact with Kṛṣṇa's sweetness. These women quickly climbing to the rooftops appear to be moonlight. ||6||

Some of the women wear only one earring and some have mascara on only one eye. Some have lac on only one foot. Some have only one breast covered with cloth. Running towards Kṛṣṇa they do not think this strange. Hearing that he is coming, they all come at the same time. ||7||

Some without bathing their bodies, some without eating, giving up the desire to live, some giving up shame in the heart, some with upper and lower cloth exchanged, all with ornaments in the wrong place, came from the roads and houses to Kṛṣṇa. ||8||

Lotus-eyed Kṛṣṇa, walking like the king of elephants, showed the prowess of a lion. The women's minds were attracted by the form which gave bliss to Lakṣmī and became most blissful. ||9||

When he gazed at the famous attractive women, they became filled with bliss by the nectar of his glance. They were attracted by the qualities of his eyes. They did not know that Kṛṣṇa was distant because he became situated in their hearts with a beautiful form. ||10||

All the women, with trembling bodies and blissful faces, climbed to the top of the palace to see Kṛṣṇa. Sprinkling his path with flowers, they increased the joy of the *devatās* and devotees. ||11||

[15] After repeating the words of the *devatās* the reciter then spoke his own words.

All the *brāhmaṇas,* ignoring Kaṃsa, who was hard to conquer by *devatās* and sages, approached Kṛṣṇa with plates full of scented water, flowers, yogurt and rice, worshiped him and followed behind him. May those *brāhmaṇas* put their feet on my head. ||12||

The citizens all said, "The cowherds are most fortunate but our hearts are attracted to the great glory of the *gopīs*. They seek out his sweetness, not his greatness, with their minds and constantly see his festive form astonishing to all people." ||13||

[16] When Kṛṣṇa was standing there, eager and curious, a dyer arrived on a village path along with his associates, herding thousands of braying donkeys.

[17] When the dyer arrived, Kṛṣṇa, who casually lifted Govardhana and destroyed the pride of demons, began to think, "This proud rascal, surrounded by his friends,

causing distress to all, had dyed many clothes for the festival and is bringing the cloth back to the city. I will take these auspicious clothes for myself for entering the city. Greeting him I will make the dyer angry at my request. I will then use force, and offending him, will take all the cloth."

[18] He then spoke aloud, with a slight mocking tone:

> *dehy āvayoḥ samucitāny aṅga vāsāṃsi cārhatoḥ |*
> *bhaviṣyati paraṃ śreyo dātus te nātra saṃśayaḥ ||*
>
> Please give suitable garments to the two of us, who certainly deserve them. If you grant this charity, you will undoubtedly receive the greatest benefit. SB 10.41.33

[19] Though the dyer, his mind clouded by passion and ignorance, had heard of famous, generous Kṛṣṇa's strength, he did not take notice. He considered that he by his own power was taking the clothing to Kaṃsa's palace on the authority of Kaṃsa. Covered with ignorance, he did not see that Kṛṣṇa was dressed in cloth given by Ananta, Varuṇa and Indra. Showing his demonic nature, the dyer, not recognizing Kṛṣṇa's greatness, mocked Kṛṣṇa in agitation:

> *īdṛśāny eva vāsāṃsi nityaṃ giri-vane-cara |*
> *paridhatta kim udvṛttā rāja-dravyāṇy abhīpsatha ||*
> *yātāśu bāliśā maivaṃ prārthyaṃ yadi jijīviṣā |*
> *badhnanti ghnanti lumpanti dṛptaṃ rāja-kulāni vai ||*
>
> You impudent boys! You're accustomed to roaming the mountains and forests, and yet you would dare put on such clothes as these! These are the King's possessions you're asking for! Fools, get out of here quickly! Don't beg like this if you want to stay alive. When someone is

too bold, the King’s men arrest him and kill him and take all his property. SB 10.41.35-36

[20] Kṛṣṇa, using his arms as swords, immediately cut down the laughing, condemned dyer filled with the mode of passion, who was like a *lāva* bird. ||14||

All the dyer’s friends fled away. The cloth lay on the ground before their eyes. They took all the cloth that was useful to them. ||15||

[21] Kṛṣṇa began strolling through the city, like the king of jungle elephants, along with Balarāma and his friends. He was the best among all those friends who were eternally beautiful. His cloth became more beautiful because of his personal beauty. Kṛṣṇa laughed as his friends said, “Take these thousands of pieces of clothing.” He separated the clothes and put on what was suitable. He was understood to be the crest jewel of persons who act without fear.

[22] When Kṛṣṇa played in this way, his friends laughed. Then one weaver with the best qualities made an outfit with ornaments and cloth, suitable for sporting as the best wrestler.

[23] This weaver did not come to Vraja for fear of Kaṃsa, but he had heard of the great happiness of Vraja from his companions who had gone there and returned. Thus he was anxious to see Kṛṣṇa.

[24] Then something astonishing happened, which no one had seen before. Kṛṣṇa gave him a form similar to his own. When Kṛṣṇa glanced at him, Kṛṣṇa’s beauty entered his body. He took a form like Kṛṣṇa’s and the form of Kṛṣṇa did not leave him. ||16 - 17||

[25] We praise this assumption of Kṛṣṇa’s qualities.

The oil bug, absorbed in the wasp, becomes a wasp. Will not a person absorbed in Kṛṣṇa quickly become like Kṛṣṇa? ||18||

I offer praise to that weaver, the chief among them, offer *āratrika* and put my head at his feet because he put the most splendid, colorful sewn cloth and ornaments on Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma. ||19||

[26] A certain well-bred garland maker of Mathurā used to go to Vṛndāvana constantly for getting rare flowers. The fortunate man used to see Kṛṣṇa wearing rustic dress.

[27] On seeing Kṛṣṇa, he had become attracted and on the pretext of collecting flowers would go to where Kṛṣṇa played and offer the flowers he had picked as a gift to him. Not only that, his name was Sudāma, like that of Kṛṣṇa's friend, the abode of happiness. Kṛṣṇa, beautiful as a cloud, accepted him as a friend. Suddenly thinking along with his friends that Sudāma must live in that place, Kṛṣṇa endowed with highest character, inquired from the residents of Mathurā and went to his house after giving the residents pleasure.

[28] The garland maker knew of Kṛṣṇa's arrival. Thinking it was a fault to meet Kṛṣṇa empty-handed, he thought of making a garland from the softest flowers suitable for Kṛṣṇa. He waited in his house.

[29] Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma, surrounded by a few friends who did not speak, came along with those attentive, praiseworthy friends who acted for their benefit, to where the garland maker had made the garland, like a secret treasure.

[30] When the two went there, their bodies emanated a most pleasant fragrance, endowed with the perfume of

all flowers and power of attraction. Recognizing the fragrance, the garland maker came to external consciousness. The most fortunate Sudāma used to meditate on Kṛṣṇa as his only object of thought. He was attractive with shyness and humility. His hairs stood on end. Quickly he offered respects with his head and offered the two, excellent seats. Thinking himself most fortunate, he offered praise in a choked voice. Gaining the mercy and love of the brothers, respecting the two together with their friends, he decorated them with the attractive garlands and then stood some distance away.

[31] When he decorated them, a most interesting thing happened. Kṛṣṇa gazed at a half-completed garland which was still most attractive. Seeing that, Sudāma in shame bowed his head and took Kṛṣṇa's blessings. With his assistants he quickly completed the garland and offered it to Kṛṣṇa. Giving the garland, he offered respects and prayed in humility: "Oh! If you have come to evil Kaṃsa's broad territory, you two should be careful, though you are the life of all beings."

[32] Saying this, he left the two boys. The boys diminished the glory of all others by their irresistible effulgence. The following words rise in my heart.

There are thousands of devotees who search for Kṛṣṇa and there are thousands who attain his beautiful feet. But I offer respects to the skillful garland maker Sudāma, for Kṛṣṇa came with Balarāma to his house with a request. ||20||

[33] On the road, Kṛṣṇa was most excited by all the surprising things.

Seeing Kubjā with a hunchback going to the bathing *ghaṭa* made of crystal carrying some cosmetics, Kṛṣṇa

asked for the cosmetics and smeared it all on his body. The cosmetics also made his friends effulgent. He then straightened out Kubjā's body, amazing everyone with his great qualities. Offering all lamentation to Kaṃsa, Kṛṣṇa began leaping about. ||21||

[34] We consider this:

If one has *bhakti* for Kṛṣṇa, one's heart will shine with straightness (honesty). If there is no *bhakti,* straightness is only an external show. If one has internal *bhakti,* the straightness will show externally. Kubjā is the example. ||22||

Kṛṣṇa destroyed the dyer and elevated many others. Remembering this, Kaṃsa attained his destruction. Seeing Kṛṣṇa's affection, power and actions, the merchants worshiped him properly on the road. ||23 - 24||

[35] Their extraordinary profession is made an example.

The merchants took the results of others by their profession of selling goods. They took special results from Kṛṣṇa, which their ancestors had not obtained. || 25||

Asking the residents, Kṛṣṇa arrived at the sacrificial arena. Huge guards with red eyes prevented them from entering. Joyfully Kṛṣṇa took the bow and easily broke it though no one could see how it was broken. But still, the sound of it breaking spread everywhere. ||26||

The loud crunching sound of the bow given by Śiva and bent by Kṛṣṇa, informed Kaṃsa that he was nothing. If Śiva were present, he also would have no power. ||27||

[36] Details of the bow:

The two tips of the bow shone like two elephant tusks a billion *hastas* long. The middle had great power like a pillar made of diamond. Three hundred men were required to carry the bow of Śiva. Its effulgence tinted all directions. Kṛṣṇa broke that bow. ||28||

Ananta's heads began to roll. The tusks of the elephants of the directions broke. Brahmā thought his planet was being crushed and the three worlds were being destroyed. It is not surprising that Kṛṣṇa smashed this fierce bow, harder than a thunderbolt, which could destroy all the universes. ||29||

Kṛṣṇa was the cloud. The bow was a rainbow. The sparks when it broke were lightning. The cracking sound when it broke was thunder rumbling in the clouds. When the rain ends, the time is bright for the devotees. When the rain at the end of the *kalpa* arrives the demons tremble. ||30||

[37] Troops came running, shouting, "Kill him, kill him." They were about to attack and covered all directions.

Sometimes one pulls the silver string on the bow, carefully places the arrow, aims the arrow, and releases it at the enemy. Like this, Kṛṣṇa with Balarāma while laughing, quickly killed Kaṃsa's troops with the two broken pieces of the bow. ||31||

[38] Climbing his diamond watchtower, Kaṃsa questioned his servant.

"What is that sound?"

"A black fellow and a white fellow went to the bow."

"Did they break the earth holding up the stage where the bow was displayed?"

"What should I say?"

“Let that be. Has someone casually and quickly lifted the bow with his own strength?”

“Ah lord, what should I say?”

“How did he kill all the troops accompanying the bow?” ||32||

The jewel of Nanda’s dynasty—who cut up Kaṃsa’s clothing as well as his chief dyer, who broke the bow and killed its guards while defeating Kaṃsa’s army with the bow, and then played while viewing the city sights with fearless heart—that jewel intoxicates me! ||33||

Seeing their beauty, courage, boldness and power, the citizens considered Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma to be *devatās* and began discussing them. Oh! Look! Seeing the sun of these two boys with magnificent beauty, the world famous sun devoid of rays quickly sets on the horizon according to schedule. ||34||

[39] In fear, Kaṃsa wanted to drive Kṛṣṇa from the city. The troops came to him. Knowing the crooked nature of the troops, and considering them insignificant, the two boys continued playing with their friends and at the end of the day went to the cart dwellings.

[40] Coming to the carts, and thinking that it is the highest *dharma* to kill those having *adharma*, not taking a bath necessary after such acts, Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma simply washed their feet and ate rice soaked in milk.

Kṛṣṇa set loose the carts at night, and ate milk rice, simple traveler’s food sent by his mother. That makes my heart melt. ||35||

[41] When the story of going to Mathurā was narrated and the people of Vraja were fully agitated, Madhukaṇṭha spoke to conclude:

“O Nanda! When Kṛṣṇa goes to Mathurā to kill Kaṃsa, think of that as a disagreeable dream. Look! Kṛṣṇa at the age of fresh beauty with lotus eyes is personally present before you.” ||36||

[42] Nanda and the people looked at Kṛṣṇa with their eyes and embraced him with their bodies. All their limbs were filled with bliss.

[43] The rest of the story was told in the gathering of Rādhā with Kṛṣṇa present. Madhukaṇṭha spoke.

Until Kṛṣṇa went to Mathurā from Vraja, the assembly sang about all his happiness as a hero using joyous words. The devotees in *madhurya-rasa* became choked up in grief, seeing the *gopīs* exhausted from separation, giving long sighs. ||37||

When the women of Mathurā came together to see Kṛṣṇa, it is true that he saw their faces and simultaneously desired something from them, for he was looking everywhere in Mathurā for forms similar to the *gopīs.* ||38||

[44] This took place because of the blessings given by Rādhā and the *gopīs.* Śukadeva has said:

> *gopyo mukunda-vigame virahāturā yā āśāsatāśiṣa ṛtā*
> *madhu-pury abhūvan |*
> *sampaśyatāṃ puruṣa-bhūṣaṇa-gātra-lakṣmīṃ*
> *hitvetarān nu bhajataś cakame ’yanaṃ śrīḥ ||*
>
> At the time of Mukunda’s departure from Vṛndāvana, the *gopīs* had foretold that the residents of Mathurā would enjoy many benedictions, and now the *gopīs’* predictions were coming true, for those residents were gazing upon the beauty of Kṛṣṇa, the jewel among men. The goddess of fortune desired the shelter of that

beauty so much that she abandoned many other men, although they worshiped her. SB 10.42.24

[45] Lalitā, who was attending the gathering asked in a suggestive way, “Those blessed by Rādhā and the *gopīs* are most desirable women. Why was virtuous Kubjā a hunchback, since for those with good character anything is possible?”

[46] Looking privately at the two reciters who could answer, Kṛṣṇa said, “These two who understand my heart are present. Please give the answer.”

[47] The two reciters said:

O Lalitā! Please listen. One should not consider the character of a merciful person for that person shows affection even to those who insult him. ||39||

If the curious person, attracted to the curious, is merciful, he will be completely destitute. To illustrate this thousands of learned people describe Kṛṣṇa and Kubjā. ||40||

[48 - 49] Of the two, Madhukaṇṭha then spoke. He had previously described this.

You ask because her face was like the moon and her body was crooked like Aṣṭāvakra. My heart thumps with excitement. ||41||

[50] “Yes, do you remember? This woman was a servant of Kaṃsa who used to prepare perfumes. Alone she held the container of perfume firmly, showing great zeal and care. It seemed she was going to Kaṃsa’s palace. Like the clothing I should accept that excellent scent which came from afar. This will produce desire in her but not agitation as in the case of the dyer. Because all the woman’s limbs were deformed, she was deprived of

living with any man. Because of the play of Cupid, greed for Kṛṣṇa arose easily in her. I consider that this lust should arise only because of seeing my limbs. I accept that lust out of curiosity with a goal in mind." Thinking in this way the crest jewel of cleverness said, "O beautiful woman! You are crooked in your movements. Who are you?"

[51] Kubjā said, "O beautiful-faced man! I am a servant."

[52] Kṛṣṇa said, "Whose servant?"

[53] Kubjā said, "Kaṃsa's."

[54] Kṛṣṇa said, "O best of women, what is your name?"

[55] Kubjā said, "O best of dear men, my name is Trivakrā."

[56 - 57] Laughing with his friends, Kṛṣṇa said, "I see that your name is quite suitable. Whose is this ointment which gives relief from fatigue?"

[58] Kubjā said, "O best of the clever! All of this has been carefully prepared for he whose servant I am."

[59] Kṛṣṇa said, "O eloquent one! Some servant will go to a neutral place with permission of her master, while another servant will go without permission."

[60] Kubjā said, "Beautiful-faced man! You speak the truth but I am doing this with my master's permission. If I did otherwise I would not be respected."

[61] Everyone said with a laugh, "Why does Kaṃsa not accept this most attractive woman as his wife?"

[62] Kṛṣṇa said, "Speak the truth. For what did you get Kaṃsa's permission?"

[63] Kubjā said with love and anger, “Why do you ask this question when you can see. I have his permission to make all these ointments full of fragrance.”

[64] Kṛṣṇa said, “That I see. Kaṃsa must have many other beautiful women like you.”

[65] Kubjā said, “There are many. But Kaṃsa likes what I produce.”

[66] Kṛṣṇa said, “If you don’t object, taking the container, I want to experience the fragrance.”

[67] Kubjā said, “I make a promise to the *gurus*. There is nothing that I will not give to you.”

[68] Kṛṣṇa said, “If that is so, then give us two the perfume flask.”

[69] Kubjā, smiling with attraction, said, “This flask of perfume is meant for no one except you two whose new youthfulness astonishes the universe. Take it all as you please.”

[70] The friends with laughter said inaudibly, “Oh! This woman has two lovers!”

[71] Kṛṣṇa spoke in order to praise her, “You will soon have good fortune.”

[72] Holding in her heart the sweetness of Kṛṣṇa’s attractive form, pastimes, joking and tender words, she gave them the ointments meant for the festival.

[73] Those cosmetics, divided into two portions for the white and black recipients, thick like the rising full moon and mixed with a little water, were enough to distribute to all their friends as well, because it had contacted Kṛṣṇa’s hand.

Putting on the yellow ointment, Kṛṣṇa shone among the boys. Balarāma shone with the beauty of black musk having excellent fragrance. Kṛṣṇa shone like a newly-formed cloud and Balarāma shone like the bright moon with its spots. ||42||

[74] Madhukaṇṭha stopped speaking out because of embarrassment in the assembly about the next topic. Lalitā spoke with a smile, “Please describe the next interesting episode with attention in which his dress was a cause of her enjoyment.”

[75] Madhukaṇṭha gave the conclusion:

Being anointed by her, Kṛṣṇa became attracted. The purifier of Pūtanā then thought, being merciful to the miserable, “Though she has a pretty face, her bent body is like a lance in her heart. But since she has served me I should show her mercy. Seeing me suddenly should shatter the lance in her heart.”

[76] He said aloud, “O Trivakrā! I ask for permission to make you straight.”

[77] Thinking he was joking, she said with a smile, “There is no harm in that, but how will it happen?”

[78] Kṛṣṇa said, “By a special hold.”

[79] When Kṛṣṇa’s friends laughed loudly, her hairs stood on end. She said, “Then come to my house.”

[80] Kṛṣṇa while laughing said, “At this time going to your house is not possible. Having faith, see with your eyes, for the astonishment of the world.”

[81] Trembling, she watched. While everyone watched, Kṛṣṇa performed an act like changing dress, astonishing all.

Placing his feet over hers, and holding her with his left hand, pulling her chin up with his middle and forefinger, he straightened her up. ||43||

The crookedness of her back and other limbs was transferred to her glance. And the glance reached her ears, then to her breasts, hips and thighs. It is not astonishing that this happened by Kṛṣṇa's touch, for she attained the good fortune that other women had attained. ||44||

[82] People heard about this with great commotion but no one knew the special feature. I will later consider Kubjā's good fortune caused by Kṛṣṇa's auspicious methods.

Wealth makes one quickly proud and poverty makes one humble. Understand that the stories in scripture are never in vain. When Kubjā gained a wealth of youth and beauty, she impetuously grabbed the end of Kṛṣṇa's upper cloth. ||45||

A poor person on gaining wealth gains power, but does not show proper behavior. In a public place Kubjā said, "O hero! Please come. I am full of desire. Please enjoy me." ||46||

[83] Lalitā said, "If she was qualified for Kṛṣṇa, performer of unlimited pastimes, she must have gained a position of great *prema* like us. Please speak more with attention."

[84] Madhukaṇṭha said with reserve:

Controlled by his curiosity, most merciful Kṛṣṇa with unequaled nature, being embarrassed, spoke to her to deceive her, while letting his smiling friends and Balarāma hear:

eṣyāmi te gṛhaṃ su-bhru puṃsām ādhi-vikarśaṇam |
sādhitārtho ’gṛhāṇāṃ naḥ pānthānāṃ tvaṃ parāyaṇam ||

O lady with beautiful eyebrows, as soon as I fulfill my purpose I will certainly visit your house, where men can relieve their anxiety. Indeed, you are the best refuge for us homeless travelers. SB 10.42.12

[85] Lalitā said with a smile, “Ah! We have understood what the great souls have said.”

[86] Viśākhā said, “Please explain.”

[87] Lalitā said with a smile:

Like an easily satisfied person who takes a hut as a palace or a stage as a bed, Kubjā takes herself to be beautiful like an Apsarā. ||47||

[88] Hearing this, Rādhā spoke with a smile, “Why Madhukaṇṭha did not say that he agreed to her request?”

[89] Madhukaṇṭha spoke:

For you the request appears like this. But I consider as follows:

If a poor person is seen by a merciful person, the merciful person’s powers will be controlled by the poor man. Curious for a moment, Kṛṣṇa glanced at Kubjā and she thus attained the power to become similar to the *gopīs.* ||48||

[90] May merciful Kṛṣṇa, performer of exciting pastimes, appear to all devotees. Rādhā! Your *prema* alone is capable of binding your friend Kṛṣṇa. ||49||

[91] When Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa had concluded their joyful conversation, they went to their attractive house.

Chapter Five

Killing Kaṃsa

[1] The morning recitation began in Nanda’s assembly with Kṛṣṇa present.

[2] Snigdhakaṇṭha spoke:

Night came. When it came, an auspicious jackal, auspicious for Kṛṣṇa and inauspicious for Kaṃsa appeared. Kaṃsa passed the fearful night dreaming and waking up. Proud Kaṃsa then intensely strengthened the sporting of the wrestlers. The arena, arranged in the center of the many viewing stands which were profusely decorated, looked attractive with various colors. It was like the sky with stars twinkling amidst a mass of autumn clouds shining with lightning.

[3] Kaṃsa occupied the highest position, like the ornament of all the evil kings. Though filled with the pride of being the king of kings, he would soon end up terrified.

Near Kaṃsa’s stand was the stand of Akrūra and Vasudeva and that of the women of Mathurā, where Devakī sat. Nanda and the cowherds were in a stand far away. Near the entrance Kaṃsa arranged for the elephant Kuvalyāpīḍa and in front he arranged the immovable wrestlers. Thus no one could be disturbed. || 1||

The music that started on the order of Kaṃsa for the wrestlers became auspicious for the entrance of Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma. ||2||

[4] When they reached the gate of the arena, the two boys did not go first, but sent the elder cowherds. After finishing morning rites, as soon as they just entered the gates of the arena, the crowd made a clamor of excitement on seeing them.

[5] To kill that elephant, fierce and dripping with juice from his forehead, putting to shame all who could not discern whether it was an elephant or a mountain, Kṛṣṇa, killer of demons, tied up his cloth and head ornaments, and approached the elephant, with Balarāma and his friends following behind.

His friends forbade him from going to the elephant by shouting and his enemies forbade the elephant from approaching, thinking Kṛṣṇa would kill him. Gazing at both sides with a smile, Kṛṣṇa approached the elephant. ||3||

[6] He asked the elephant to get out of the way and then went boldly towards the elephant which was enraged by its mahout. Repeatedly the elephant tried to crush him with its trunk, tusks and feet, but he escaped. He grasped its tail and whirled it around. Facing it, he struck the elephant. Running towards it, he quickly threw it on the ground. In confusion the beast twitched its limbs. ||4||

The elephant became unsteady when its tusks, difficult to grasp, hit the earth. When Kṛṣṇa got close to the tusks he grabbed them and threw the elephant on the ground. Attacking its body, he uprooted its tusks. This killed the elephant. Viewed by the spectators, his actions were like

waves in the ocean, which submerged the people and then pulled them out. ||5||

When the elephant was killed, what use were the mahouts? When the wrestlers were crushed what can be said of the bugs residing there? ||6||

[7] Some details:

“He moves like a dancer and destroys like a lion. He breaks thunderbolts.” This is what the elephant thought on seeing Kṛṣṇa. ||7||

Killing the pachyderm and taking its two tusks, Kṛṣṇa gave one to Balarāma. By this he taught to all that the fame produced by one of them was the fame of two. ||8||

Kṛṣṇa killed the elephant. Balarāma was covered with red drops of the elephant’s *mada.*[1] Close by Kṛṣṇa’s side, he moved about like his shadow. ||9||

[8] The *devatās,* afraid of the arrow of the elephant’s roar, were called sleepless[2] because of not sleeping due to fear. The elephant Kuvalayāpīḍa, superior in strength to the *devatās,* was killed by Kṛṣṇa. Thus the *devatās* became motionless like pictures, out of astonishment. Out of fear no one could boldly tell Kaṃsa the news.

[9] Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma, looking splendid in the clothing looted from the king’s wardrobe the previous day, with the tusks of the recently killed elephant in their hands, their anklets and bracelets sprinkled with its blood and *mada*, came before the king with their friends of similar beauty. ||10||

Courage is the ornament of men, by which the despicable becomes praiseworthy. The bodies of the two,

sprinkled with *mada* and blood from the elephant's tusks, looked beautiful in Kaṃsa's assembly. ||11||

His enemies saw him as fearful. The neutral parties saw him as neither fearful nor giving joy. His sympathizers saw him as a form giving joy and attained various special states. According to their individual moods, Kṛṣṇa strongly experienced those feelings simultaneously. ||12||

How can one describe his supreme sweetness at that time, because of which, even while Kaṃsa was living, thousands and thousands of people praised him in the assembly? How can one describe his power? The *devatās* considered Kaṃsa, though living, to be dead from being merged in that power. ||13||

[10] The two praiseworthy boys, with broad chests, entered the arena while holding the tusks. They looked like two elephants with water lily stems in their trunks and gazed at Kaṃsa while denigrating him with words like, "What is he anyway?" Turning their backs to him, they then looked around.

[11] Kṛṣṇa came close and looked at him again: "Oh! He is following half the path to Svarga. It is not too unfortunate to send him there." Laughing, he played with his friends and exchanged news.

[12] Colored red with the blood of the dead elephant, Kṛṣṇa appeared like Śiva at the time of the destruction of the universe. Seeing him, Kaṃsa's effulgence was destroyed. "Who are those two?" he asked. His attendants said, "Those are the two."

[13] Kaṃsa said, "What is in their hands? Why are their bodies painted?"

[14] They all said, “Those are tusks of Kuvalayāpīḍa. They are covered with the elephant’s blood.”

[15] Kaṃsa said in pride and anger, “Ah! O sinful people! It is impossible that they can be the subject of words.”

[16] When the attendants no longer answered, the effulgence of the two boys informed Kaṃsa:

“O Kaṃsa, if you are strong, that is a misfortune. Why did you put the elephant at the gate and not your body? If you think those tusks are the best, why did you not grab them?” By their appearance they hinted this to Kaṃsa. ||14||

[17] “He killed Pūtanā and overturned the cart demon. He destroyed the wind demon and uprooted the *arjuna t*rees.” Describing Kṛṣṇa’s Vraja pastimes, the people of Mathurā saw Kṛṣṇa before them. He melted the hearts of those looking and the hearts of others who heard the words, “See today what will happen.” ||15||

[18] The women of Svarga became submerged in bliss by simultaneously attempting to open their eyes wide to see the complete forms of the two boys, to move their tongues to taste the full sweetness of his descriptions, to widen their nostrils to let their complete fragrance enter their hearts, taking pride in the festival of attaining the boys’ fragrance, and to throw up their hands to embrace him. Music also sounded. He who is satisfied with praise was praised in this way.

[19] His special powers surpassed all conceptions continually. Hearing of Kṛṣṇa’s powers, Kaṃsa had first sent the wrestlers but the wrestlers ended up praising him by using critical words.

[20] At that time most cruel Cāṇūra spoke. He addressed the two as “son of Nanda” and “Rāma” without respect and without mentioning their father’s name (Vasudeva) in order to show disrespect to them. However Sarasvatī made his voice dance in order to praise Kṛṣṇa. By mentioning the words Nanda (bliss) and Rāma (enjoyment), he indicated that these two were equal to *avatāras* by having complete bliss as their quality.

[21] Kṛṣṇa said with a smile, “Order us as you please.”

[22] Cāṇūra said, “Good fortune should be situated in your minds.”

[23] Kṛṣṇa said, “How?”

[24] Cāṇūra said, “The king is present, desiring to give his merciful glance.”

[25] Kṛṣṇa said, “True. Please instruct us what we must do.”

[26] Cāṇūra said, “It is proper that you agree. If you are disinclined to fight, it will make us unhappy.”

[27] Kṛṣṇa said, “Being forest people, we have not met persons of elevated conduct respected by the king’s followers. But now we will follow your instruction and act according to the place.”

[28] Cāṇūra said, “For now, do whatever the exalted king orders.”

[29] Kṛṣṇa said with feigned politeness, “Best of wrestlers! Please give the order.”

[30] Cāṇūra said, “You should remain here and experience the happiness of playing with us.”

[31] Kṛṣṇa said, “The king will take pleasure in seeing the playing of us children. But you will experience

lamentation. Now you are laughing but this is not proper for you, who are persons endowed with the king's authority."

[32] Cāṇūra said, "I swear to the honorable king. This is the king's order."

[33] Kṛṣṇa said, "How is that?"

[34 - 35] Cāṇūra said, "You were not babies when you killed Pūtanā. You were not boys when you performed pastimes like lifting Govardhana. You were not a youth when you killed the elephant which looked like an elephant of the directions. Since you are so strong, the king will take pleasure in seeing us fight with you. And you elder brother showed superiority in killing Pralamba and others." ||16||

[36] Kṛṣṇa said, "They died because without cause they showed hatred and sinful conduct towards us. Indra's pride was cut down spontaneously so the sacrificial festival could take place. We are just cowherd boys. Dhenuka was an old bull infested with bugs. His skin was torn in trying to throw off various people riding on him. He crumbled when we just touched him. First the elephant came to kill me. I fled in fear. The elephant drove its tusks into the earth to strike me, and could not remove them. When the elephant pulled this way and that, the tusks broke and the elephant died. People by looking thought that I was the cause of its death. The mahouts died by being crushed under its feet. Do not think otherwise."

[37] Cāṇūra said, "You are hiding your sinful acts by trying to show humility. The king is not unhappy with these events. He has sent to you persons having long-lasting pride, in order to curb their arrogance since they

were useless for protecting him. He wants to exchange them for you two only for increasing his own strength."

[38] Kṛṣṇa said, "This is most astonishing luck for us. However, you embarrass us with praise. We will serve him by giving him the position of a king (or destination of Indra's place-death). And we are a little reserved because we are not expert in the art of wrestling."

[39] Cāṇūra said, "Do not uselessly hide the truth. We have heard what is well known. The cowherds in tending their flocks practice our art. You should follow our order and the king's order and not disobey."

[40] Kṛṣṇa said, "Since we are forest people we do not have knowledge of this great art. Following your order, we are ready to show the king."

[41] After broadcasting this information, they drove the tusks firmly in the ground in front of Kaṃsa, as if driving stakes into his chest. Balarāma, whose fist punched Pralamba, was matched with Muṣṭika and Kṛṣṇa whose feet touch Garuḍa was matched with Cāṇūra.

It was like a glorious, frolicking lion freshly matched with a huge elephant possessed of great strength.

Displaying anger, they wrestled hand to hand, arm to arm, foot to foot, knee to knee, hip to hip, fist to fist and palm to palm. Imagine how many techniques Kṛṣṇa and Cāṇūra used! ||17||

Stopping him with his hand, Kṛṣṇa grabbed Cāṇūra and blocked his hand. Balarāma grabbed Muṣṭika. In choking the wrestlers, they choked Kaṃsa. ||18||

Something astonishing happened. When Kṛṣṇa pulled the wrestler's limbs to his inconceivable limbs, the strong

wrestler died though from a distance it appeared that he hit the wrestler many times to kill him. ||19||

When the two large wrestlers came to strike Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma, they missed them. ||20||

[42] The wrestlers at first could not recognize but later understood Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma's strength, and in either case they blamed Kaṃsa.

The wrestlers first thought, "These boys are very strong but do not know wrestling. Why did Kaṃsa not match us with someone who knows fighting?" ||21||

[43] Later they thought, "We can really understand that these two are most expert in wrestling and scriptures. Frightened Kaṃsa has foolishly matched us with them. ||22||"

[44] Others, along with the women, criticized Kaṃsa.

"These wrestlers are strong as mountains and thunderbolts. The two boys are so soft. Curse the king who permitted this fight. But why should they and we not be criticized in the assembly since we are seeing maltreatment of the righteous with curiosity?" ||23||

"We have not done any pious acts, for after seeing Kṛṣṇa for a few seconds with difficulty, calamity, like a demon, appears for those having affection for him. The women who experience happiness on seeing Kṛṣṇa go to the forest in the morning and return in the evening have accrued profuse pious acts." ||24||

"We are cursed because out of fear of Kaṃsa we cannot chant Kṛṣṇa's name. We offer unlimited respects to the women of Vraja who sing about his qualities constantly while doing household chores and who play in his heart at all times." ||25||

“This form is a result of what incomparable piety? The *gopīs* drink this form, the incomparable essence of beauty, eternally perfect, the only shelter of power and good qualities, appearing ever fresh, with their eyes.” ||26||

“Who can describe the greatness of the *gopīs’ prema*? Look! Our hearts are following him, giving up our bodies. Govinda pulls everyone’s heart near with his beauty filled with fatigue from fighting. Balarāma also does this.” ||27||

“Running towards the angry enemy, Kṛṣṇa remains extraordinarily peaceful with his smiling lotus face, perspiration and enthusiasm for fighting. Since Balarāma’s eyes and face are red from anger at the opponent, it appears to be his nature—manifesting as Kṛṣṇa’s fiery brilliance.” ||28||

“All the righteous, including Vasudeva, Nanda, and Devakī, speaking like me with blazing hearts, with intense gazes, are continually agitated by Kaṃsa. It seemed that he will soon die.” ||29||

[45] Those who realized their great powers also criticized Kaṃsa.

“As a concealed hunter throws a dog to a lion, frightened Kaṃsa throws these wrestlers to Kṛṣṇa.” ||30||

“He who killed his troopers like Pūtanā, who completely cut down Indra’s pride, who inconceivably bewildered Brahmā, has promised to defeat Kaṃsa.” ||31||

“What is the comparison of self-manifesting Kṛṣṇa with ignorant wrestlers? Look at the amazing battle between light and darkness.” ||32||

“Though Kṛṣṇa and the wrestlers grapple each other they do not touch because of Kṛṣṇa’s special powers just as light and darkness do not mix.” ||33||

“In Kṛṣṇa’s heroic body there is not a trace of arrogance, panic or injury. See! His excellent prowess is like poison in front of Cāṇūra and crushes to bits his vital organs.” ||34||

“Look before you. As fire consumes grass, as a thunderbolt splits a mountain, as Agastya swallowed the ocean, as moonlight destroys darkness, as Viṣṇu’s name destroys all sin, Kṛṣṇa is victorious in the arena over the wrestler with ugly, huge, tough limbs.” ||35||

“See the amazing scene of Kṛṣṇa fighting. Afflicting Cāṇūra, he pierces the heart of Kaṃsa.” ||36||

“The fool punches Kṛṣṇa with his iron fist. When it touches Kṛṣṇa’s heart, Kṛṣṇa’s hairs stand on end in joy.” ||37||

[46] Thus with lamentation and criticism people watched.

Laughing once, Kṛṣṇa grabbed him, twirled him in the air, and on seeing him said, “Unfortunately, you are dead.” While Kaṃsa watched, he threw the wrestler on the earth with disrespect. ||38||

When Muṣṭika threw his punches, Balarāma was happy. Receiving a strike from Balarāma’s palm, he died. ||39||

In front, with his limbs quivering in pain, his distracted eyes trembling in terror, frightening to see, crushed by time in the form of Balarāma and Kṛṣṇa, indicating the path of Kaṃsa, Cāṇūra and Muṣṭika passed to another world, causing astonishment to all eyes. ||40||

When Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma, playing with the wrestlers, threw the two on the ground carelessly, not showing knowledge of skill, Kūṭa immediately came with Śala and Tośala, but Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma danced, splitting them open by striking them with their left feet and left hands. ||41||

[47] Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma wanted to fight with all the assembled troops in the back and all the other wrestlers.

[48] When these wrestlers were killed the other wrestlers fled, making Kṛṣṇa, Balarāma and others laugh. ||42||

“Just as you sent your troops to kill me and I sent them to the other world; when you sent the elephant to the gate, I sent him to the other world, and then today, I have sent off the wrestlers. Now I will play with my friends on this comfortable road. In this way Kṛṣṇa instructed Kaṃsa in the assembly and played. ||43||

When they were playing with their friends, the friends defeated the two brothers. Seeing this defeat by their friends, Kaṃsa was troubled in his heart. ||44||

[49] The two caused astonishment in mock fighting with their friends as the praiseworthy four *varṇas* watched. The two who were respected equally, gave respect to their friends of the same age. They appeared glorious with the joy caused by the faultless heavenly and earthly music. They kept the beat while wrestling as the main dancers in a divine performance. They mounted the heavenly airplanes in a joyous festival. Their prestige increased by the shower of flowers. For half-an-hour they made everyone fix their minds on one object.

[50] Everyone was attached to Kṛṣṇa, but Kaṃsa, unable to tolerate him, showed pride. Noting that wealth and

power were actually the same, and that he would soon order that all the cowherds' wealth should be seized, he waved his hands several times to stop the music.

[51] When the heavenly music, though faultless, was stopped, Kṛṣṇa with brilliant moves began jumping attractively with his friends. Hearing the harsh words of Kaṃsa directed to Nanda, Vasudeva and Ugrasena, and aiming to remove the faults from Kaṃsa's words and his stopping the music, the independent enemy of Kaṃsa, Kṛṣṇa, ran quickly with a laugh, jumped on Kaṃsa's stage, and glanced about.

[52] Kṛṣṇa's intolerable bodily effulgence fought with Kaṃsa and Kaṃsa was destroyed. Defeated, his mind became deflated. He lost all composure, and grasping his sword and shield, began pacing about. Unconquerable Kṛṣṇa, walking joyfully, grabbed Kaṃsa's hair as if it was a natural action. Kaṃsa could not understand what happened, just as a rabbit cannot understand how it is caught by a hawk.

[53] People praise this:

As a hawk attacks a pigeon, as a lion attacks an elephant, as a thunderbolt splits a mountain, as Garuḍa catches a snake and plays with it, Kṛṣṇa, going to the sturdy podium, quickly grabbed Kaṃsa and, taking control, played with him. ||45||

[54] As people recited this verse, Kṛṣṇa just by taking him by the hair, released half his life airs. Grabbing him, he pulled him from the dais and released the other half of his life airs. Impassioned by the desire to fight, Kṛṣṇa did not realize how swiftly he could kill him.

Kṛṣṇa pulled Kaṃsa's hair and held his life airs in his fist. But that is not astonishing. Remember how Kṛṣṇa as

a baby pulled out the life airs in drinking from Pūtanā's breast. ||46||

Kaṃsa's sword and shield fell and his jeweled armor came off. His hair was scruffy and his crown was in disarray. The fool on whom Kṛṣṇa placed his feet fell from the dais in front of everyone. ||47||

Previously Kaṃsa was known to have stopped blinking his eyes out of fear. The fearful people however could not say, "Kṛṣṇa has killed him." To make his death known, Kṛṣṇa, like a lion, dragged his body around the arena nonchalantly like the best of lions, making marks on the ground. ||48||

With shouts of "Victory! Victory", music blared, flowers fell in thick showers, as heaven and earth offered praises. Kṛṣṇa, increasing Kaṃsa's knowledge, worshiped by his relatives and well-wishers, became stunned in his intelligence. ||49||

Kṛṣṇa was worshiped by brilliant showers of flowers laden with the best perfumes, by heavenly music, assistants to words of the *devatās* spreading the news of Kaṃsa's death everywhere. Though situated on the earth, Kṛṣṇa had profuse power and effulgence and was attractive with profuse streams of bliss. May he be everyone's object of meditation! ||50||

When Kaṃsa's brothers like Kaṅka arrived out of gratitude to him, Balarāma destroyed them all with his club to help Kṛṣṇa. ||51||

[55] We will now describe details of the story taking support from *Bhāgavatam* mixed with *Hari-vaṃsa.*

[56] Kṛṣṇa, rejoicing, offered respects to Vasudeva and Nanda. Since he had freed Vasudeva, everyone was

pleased. Searching for Devakī, going to her house, he met all the elder women. He met all other relatives and made them all happy. He spoke to others in order to free Ugrasena who had been imprisoned and had had his wealth stolen by Kaṃsa. Using his left hand, with little effort, Kṛṣṇa had pulled Kaṃsa by his hair, though he could not be pulled by a herd of elephants. He pulled him along a road boarding a canal. Followed by Vasudeva and Nanda, who were surrounded by rejoicing crowds, he then took rest at Viśrānti-tīrtha.

[57] Balarāma and others, dragging Kaṇka and other enemies around, showered joy on everyone and then killed them all.

[58] The respectable people saw that those who had been killed fell from Bhuvar-loka as if from a demonic planet. At this, the devotees' minds became peaceful.

When the messenger that Nanda quickly sent to Vraja to inform them of Kaṃsa's death arrived there, the joyful music in Vraja not only reached Mathurā but some people of Mathurā became one with that music. ||52||

[59] Kaṃsa's wives became almost lifeless, and pounded their foreheads with their fists. Coming to the place, and seeing no alternative, they embraced their husband. Hating their life airs, they wailed and shed tears. Their mothers also lamented.

Previously the wives had concealed the signs of their husband's death. Now they revealed all the signs in the pain of their lamentation, giving up all shyness in front of Kṛṣṇa. ||53||

Hearing their cries and seeing their tears, he felt remorse, criticized himself, and consoled them thoroughly with gentle words. ||54||

Though he consoled the women, they did not accept his consolation. The Yādavas then engaged others in this and took him into the city. ||55||

[60] There the Yadus were delayed by various disturbances. When Akrūra expressed desire to bring Kṛṣṇa to his house, Nanda, the best follower of etiquette, refused and instead took Kṛṣṇa along with Balarāma to Vasudeva's house and made them sit down there.

Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma were in the middle, with Vasudeva and Nanda on either side. In front of them, the best of the Yadus, full of longing, crowded together to meet them. ||56||

In front of Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma stood Nanda to introduce the elders and Akrūra to introduce the younger generation. ||57||

[61] Kṛṣṇa was troubled by the prolonged sobbing of Kaṃsa's wives. Ugrasena, the moon of whose face was eclipsed by the offenses of his son Kaṃsa, met Kṛṣṇa. Along with his relatives, seeing no alternative, he held in front of him the ornaments of a king, including an umbrella with a golden staff. He remained standing with head bowed down.

[62] Understanding that Ugrasena was the king, Vasudeva and Nanda stood up. When they rose, Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma also rose and acknowledged Ugrasena. Acknowledging them, Ugrasena felt distressed, but greeted them with respect. While offering respects, Vasudeva and Nanda placed Ugrasena, shaking with fear, in front of the city to establish his position.

[63] Ugrasena, feeling fear and discomfort because of the offenses of his son Kaṃsa, spoke while lamenting,

“Though the relative of an offender should not speak to the righteous, an urgent situation will make him speak.” ||58||

[64] Kṛṣṇa said, “Please give us the order.”

[65 - 66] Ugrasena said, “He who destroys ignorance is the king of the world. Who can be king of the day except the sun, since it alone destroys darkness? He who is experienced follows the path of old age. Dependent on the speed of time, no one can oppose time. Let the umbrella and other insignia of the king be taken by yourself.” ||59 - 60||

[67] Kṛṣṇa said:

All have heard that I killed your son. How can I reverse that now? But it appears that his destruction was dependent on me. But the real cause is time which takes the form of the violence inflicted on people like you. Though I knew about his enmity when I attained intelligence and strength in an independent condition, I did not give it much regard. I didn’t know it at all when I was a child. Kaṃsa then sent his cohorts including Pūtanā and was destroyed by that same time.

Pūtanā, giving me pain while offering her breasts, died. Cruel Tṛṇāvarta, trying to take me away by trickery, was killed. Vatsāsura, desiring to kill me, died. Baka, desiring to swallow me, died. Vyomāsura, trying to separate me from my friends, died. Agha, desiring to eat me with my friends, died. Pralamba, stealing Balarāma, died. Vṛṣāsura, desiring to kill me, died. Keśi, coming to devour me, died of his own accord. What is my fault in this? ||61||

Your son sent Akrūra and tried to kill me by the elephant and the wrestlers. Hearing his abusive scolding I became

frightened. I desired to do atonements. When I grabbed a portion of his hair, he died. ||62||

[68] The cause of death for the snake-like uncle who devours his relatives and others is his own sinful acts. I did not desire it. If I killed him, then how can ruling this kingdom be pleasing to me?

[69] If I accept the kingdom, my vow will be broken. But my vow is never broken at any time. The devotees will gossip about my position as the speaker of truth.

ahaṃ sa eva go-madhye gopaiḥ saha vanecaraḥ |
prītimān vicariṣyāmi kāmacārī yathā gajaḥ

etāvac chataśopy evaṃ satyenaiva bravīmi te |
na me kāryaṃ nṛpatvena vijñāpyaṃ kriyatām idam |
bhavān mānyostu rājā ye yadūnām agrajaḥ prabhuḥ ||

I live in the forest and in joy wander about among the cows with the cowherds as I please like an elephant. I speak the truth. I have hundreds of vows. It is not necessary that I rule the kingdom. I request that you rule the kingdom. Since you are respected, the eldest of the Yadus and capable, you should rule. *Hari-vaṃsa* 78.35-37 ||63 - 64||

[70] Everyone appreciated his proper conduct and remained standing for some moments with tears in their eyes, which were filled with the sweetness of his face. Vasudeva was afraid and Nanda was joyful. Seeing Ugrasena frightened because of his own people and his enemies, Kṛṣṇa then said, “This warrior family is now endowed with a king. If you accept to be the protector of this land I will help you for some days. Otherwise I will return immediately to Gokula and become fully happy.”

[71] Absorbed in Kṛṣṇa and knowing that everyone would suffer without a king, Ugrasena remained silent. Kṛṣṇa, craving the *prema* of Gokula, firmly put the crown on Ugrasena's head.

[72] Giving up pride, everyone bowed their heads to him. Kṛṣṇa then made an announcement: "Putting you in front, we will all perform the rites for your son who has attained the destination of warriors. Vasudeva and Nanda, being tired, should go to their houses." Speaking to Śrīdāma he said, "Balarāma and I will do the funeral rites. You should follow Nanda and go to the cart encampment for the night."

[73] Sending everyone off and taking some rest, Kṛṣṇa then took the dead bodies by boat to the northern bank of the Yamunā and performed the death rites. He then went with Balarāma to Vasudeva's house.

[74] Going there, Kṛṣṇa passed through the impassable doors and attentively offered respects to Vasudeva and Devakī. Experiencing Kṛṣṇa's powers, their sentiments as mother and father disappeared and they felt uncomfortable accepting respects from Kṛṣṇa. Understanding their feelings, Kṛṣṇa sat down with sadness. Then with hearts filled with compassion like Nanda's and Yaśodā's, they strongly embraced Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma and remained seated like inanimate objects for some moments.

As long as a devotee does not experience Kṛṣṇa's sweetness, strong feelings of the Lord's power arising from fear and respect will arise in his heart. How can it be otherwise? Śukadeva has continually and excellently praised Kṛṣṇa's sweetness in Vraja. ||65||

[75] Going out with Vasudeva, Kṛṣṇa, affectionate to his servants, giving joy to all by his fame, on remembering Uddhava remained with unblinking eyes, having a desire to see him. Kṛṣṇa immediately called him from the house by sending men to him, since Uddhava was watching him at a distance because of his reserve.

When they met for the first time, they lost awareness. “Who am I? Where am I? When did this happen? Who are these people?” If people nearby could not understand the cause of their loss of consciousness, who could understand? Only their *prema* understood their feeling. ||66||

[76] Kṛṣṇa with Balarāma then went a slight distance from Vasudeva on some pretext and met with Uddhava. Bringing him close, Kṛṣṇa embraced him in joy while gazing at his face constantly, soaking him with his cool streams of tears, which made a pond, which arose from his heart full of separation.

[77] Taking permission from Vasudeva, Kṛṣṇa, along with Balarāma and Uddhava, went to Ugrasena’s house. While Kaṃsa’s wives wept, he brought Ugrasena to the assembly with the Yadu troops, convinced him that he should accept the kingdom, and placed him on the throne. He then returned to Vasudeva’s house.

Why would Kṛṣṇa desire Kaṃsa’s wealth, when his wealth made lordship over millions of universes and the wealth of Vaikuṇṭha insignificant? ||67||

[78] Vasudeva, mounting a huge chariot with Kṛṣṇa, Balarāma and Uddhava, manifesting great joy, and fulfilling all desires, went to the impenetrable cart encampment to meet Nanda. When he arrived, the two met with deep embraces. Meeting Nanda’s younger

brothers, they discussed the spying and disturbances caused by Kaṃsa, now dead. Vasudeva then requested that as long as Nanda remained there Nanda and the cowherds should eat at his house as if it were theirs.

[79] Every day there was a great festival. Kṛṣṇa with Balarāma attended the assemblies of Ugrasena or of Vasudeva at the time of establishing a new, long-lasting kingdom, by unifying the Yadus who had fled in fear of Kaṃsa. Then going to the cart encampment he would play with his friends in amazing ways.

[80] Finishing the story for the day, Snigdhakaṇṭha spoke:

“O Nanda! Kṛṣṇa who previously killed Kaṃsa rests on your lap. Look at Kṛṣṇa, like a treasure gathered from one of the continents.” ||68||

[81] When the story was finished the bards of Vraja in great bliss spoke as follows.

O Kṛṣṇa, creating auspiciousness for yourself, creating auspiciousness for the people of Mathurā. Victory to you!

You make the citizens of Mathurā blissful by your various pastimes. You are expert at bewildering the minds of the Mathurā women. You took Kaṃsa’s clothing from the dyer. When the weaver made you beautiful, you made him beautiful.

Showering mercy on the devotees, you fulfilled the desires of the garland maker.

You made your body beautiful with Kubjā’s sandalwood, and made her crooked body beautiful.

You asked the whereabouts of the bow at Kaṃsa’s sacrifice and gave happiness to all the city folk. You

broke the sacrificial bow of Kaṃsa and defeated the proud warriors who could not tolerate this.

You asked the mahouts to make way and when they became angry you killed the elephant. Balarāma and you were decorated with the elephant's tusks. You ornamented the Bhoja dynasty when you entered the arena.

You were covered in elephant's blood. You are known in various ways by various people. You have no opponent in the universe. In front of Kaṃsa you killed all his wrestlers.

In the whole assembly no one can compare to you. You enchanted the word by dressing as a wrestler. You became angry on hearing the criticisms of Kaṃsa's men and defeated them all with the lightning of your glance.

You shook the grandstands with your jumping. You agitated Kaṃsa by the prowess of your playing. You quickly threw Kaṃsa from the podium and destroyed the affliction of the three worlds.

You freed everyone from suffering and immediately gave Kaṃsa liberation. You freed Vasudeva from prison. You were determined to give happiness to the devotees. You pulled Kaṃsa to the Viśrānti-ghāṭa. You exceed all with your manifested powers.

You gave the acquired kingdom to Ugrasena. You gave joy to all by your fame.

You deliver all those whom you protect. You give joy to Vraja.

Victory! Victory! Victory! Victory! Victory! Victory! Victory! Victory!

Victory! Victory! Victory! Victory! Victory! Victory! Victory! Victory! Victory! ||69||

[82] Everyone, who had become increasingly attentive because of the recitation by the two reciters, the praises of the bards, and because of the satisfaction of Kṛṣṇa's constant association, developed happiness sympathetic to the reciters and bards.

[83] When the evening recitation took place, Snigdhakaṇṭha spoke before Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa:

When the happy news came to Vraja, from there a message came to Kṛṣṇa. That message from the devotees will be described tomorrow. Now hear the confidential, auspicious message of the *gopīs* whose devastation from long separation mixed with fear had decreased slightly on hearing that Kṛṣṇa had offered the kingdom to Ugrasena.

O beloved Kṛṣṇa! Separation from you afflicts your wives, the *gopīs*. Ah! Will this separation not separate them from their life airs? ||70||

For the *gopīs* the forest has become their home, and their home has become a forest. For the *gopīs,* will not separation from you, make death into life and life into death? ||71||

For the *gopīs,* sandalwood and the moon produces heat. In separation from you, will not fire (death) bring relief? ||72||

Separation is good. It reduces the pain. But your making the bold promise to return creates an obstacle to our relief. ||73||

Killer of Agha! Time which you have regulated for keeping order has become a destroyer. For us a moment is as long as a *kalpa.* ||74||

[84] Rādhā's *sakhīs* wrote verses in this vein:

O destroyer of Agha! The wounds of separation never give us pain. But if Rādhā's beauty withers away we will not accept that separation. ||75||

[85] There may be other causes, but this is most intolerable.

"O parrot! You and I will take a little of that food soaked in ghee that Rādhā brings for Kṛṣṇa to eat. May the sweet sound of Kṛṣṇa's name spread everywhere." Saying this, and every morning repeating, "O king of Mathurā!" the *śārikā* bird living in Vṛndāvana gives intense pain to Rādhā. ||76||

When Kṛṣṇa heard the letters of the *sakhī*s his tears stopped and he became steady. ||77||

[86] Seeing the *gopīs* exhaling heavily when this talk started, Snigdhakaṇṭha concluded with enthusiasm.

"O Rādhā! How can your lover who has such attachment to you be callous? Look! Kṛṣṇa, dark as a rain cloud, is showering your creeper body with tears." ||78||

[87] Concluding the *madhura-rasa* with these words, the two reciters, giving bliss to all and filled with the highest bliss themselves, went to their dwellings and Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa went to Cupid's chamber.

Chapter Six

Bidding Farewell to Nanda

[1] In the assembly of Nanda with Kṛṣṇa present the morning talk began. Madhukaṇṭha spoke:

[2] After the death of Kaṃsa, when Kṛṣṇa was delayed in returning to Vraja to prevent competition for position, to call the Yadus from various places, and to destroy Kaṃsa's allies, while Upananda and others in Vraja were blissful hearing the news at every moment but were troubled by the spike of fear that he would be delayed, some news arrived from Vraja.

Till that time, Yaśodā had not eaten, nor had her attendants. The cowherds in Vraja were without means of staying alive. What can be said? All the animals of Vraja and the forest wailed because of injury. ||1||

[3] Due to withering of his mind, Kṛṣṇa stopped walking and remembered the predictions of Nārada. Accepting those words, bearing Vraja's suffering in separation, and hearing the news from Vraja, he thought he must go to Vraja urgently. He spoke to Balarāma privately and frankly, "O brother! Please assist me in Mathurā. I will go to Vraja again."

[4] With tears Balarāma said, "O brother! Actually without you I am destroyed. I can do nothing."

[5] Kṛṣṇa said, "What should be done?"

[6] Balarāma said, “Making the Yadus obedient to Ugrasena, we will both go to Gokula. I have told you what is best. By fate, you have raised this issue with bliss.”

[7] Kṛṣṇa along with Balarāma went to the Yadu’s assembly where Vasudeva was absent, and with folded hands spoke. “I have a request.”

[8] Everyone said respectfully, “Please order us.”

[9] Kṛṣṇa said, “You all go to your houses and Ugrasena sits on the throne as previously. You are all happy. Previously I said that the kingdom is not attractive to me, but Vṛndāvana gives me great happiness.”

[10 - 11] When the assembly heard his words with attention, while looking at his face, Vikadru, an elder Yadu, spoke with great agitation.

“Previously we had one destroyer, Kaṃsa. Because of his strength, we did not consider anyone else. But when you killed Kaṃsa, others similar to him, thinking themselves powerful, have appeared. In the name of relationship, Jarāsandha and millions of others, flaunting millions of weapons have sprung up. The Yādavas, whose survival depends on taking shelter of you with affection, must be established and fixed permanently. Moreover the words from the sky heard by Kaṃsa ‘The eighth child will kill you’ (SB 10.1.34) is the witness. You are actually our child, not Nanda’s. You must therefore protect us every day. There are no dangers for the cowherds now. You should do what is beneficial. What more can be said in the presence of the person with the highest *dharma*, the destroyer of enemies of the devotees?”

[12] Hearing these undeniable words, Kṛṣṇa was silent. With sorrowful mind he left the assembly and went to the

palace with Vasudeva and Devakī. There, along with Balarāma he made a request to them: “Please pay attention in order to give an order to my father and mother.”

[13] They said, “What is that?”

[14] Kṛṣṇa said, “We will go to Vraja which is without light and people.”

[15] On hearing his words Vasudeva and Devakī remained silent. On hearing his words at Ugrasena’s coronation they had not been happy. These words are recorded faithfully in *Hari-vaṃsa* and other works by Vaiśampāyana and others: “I stay among the cows.” They understood his mind. If he went to Vraja and met everyone there he would forget everything else.

[16] After a long time they said, “We will be rejected by you two, after attaining you, our life airs, after a long time.”

After considering, Akrūra’s mother uttered some cruel words: “If the people of Vraja come and go from here, this will be Vraja. Thus Kṛṣṇa will not have to leave Mathurā.”

[17] Everyone looked at Kṛṣṇa’s face and thought for a long time.

[18] After this Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma when to a private place where they could discuss matters fully. “We have requested our respected parents bluntly. But worrying greatly that we will not return from Vraja, they have replied in this way. Ignoring superiors’ orders is not auspicious. In order to follow the order of his parents, Rāma, most respectful to his parents, gave up his excellent kingdom, mother and companions and, with his

newel married wife Sītā, went to live in the forest filled with ferocious Rākṣasas. We must consider the result of disobeying their order. Looking for us, Jarāsandha and other demons will attack Vraja. By carrying out our plan, many other events will take place. It is best that we now take shelter of Nanda's feet."

[19] After discussing, they went to Nanda's encampment and his area. Meeting him and offering respects, when the two were seated, Balarāma told Nanda what had happened in the assembly.

[20] Seeing with humility Nanda and his brothers, he said at the end with a smile, "Ah! Taking the incidental prediction from the sky as proof, they infer that I am the son of Devakī but they did not raise the point within that prediction about how I really appeared––with two arms."

[21] When Madhukaṇṭha had spoken up this point, Snigdhakaṇṭha began to think:

"Actually because of his inconceivable powers, Kṛṣṇa appears to Devakī with four arms and to Yaśodā with two arms according to the logic that one can infer the cause of the fruit by the fruit. When Devakī wanted to hide his four-armed form out of fear of Kaṃsa, the two-armed form which had appeared to Yaśodā made its appearance to Devakī, causing the four-armed form to disappear. (*Pūrva Campū* 3.102) This was established in the previous volume with statements from *Bhāgavatam.* This was however not known to either mother previously."

[22] He then spoke aloud: "How could the Yadus mention the facts. If they did, then the claim of Nanda, whose other child in the form of Yogamāyā was stolen by Vasudeva, would be true. Let that be. How did Nanda understand this?"

[23] Madhukaṇṭha said, “Giving a skeptical laugh Nanda took the idea that Kṛṣṇa was Devakī’s child to be a lie. The voice from the sky said, ‘Fool, the eighth child of Devakī whom you are carrying in your chariot will kill you.’ (SB 10.1.34) This is not contradicted by the later words of Devī.

“O Kaṃsa, you fool, what will be the use of killing me? The Supreme Personality of Godhead, who has been your enemy from the very beginning and who will certainly kill you, has already taken his birth somewhere else. Therefore, do not unnecessarily kill other children.” (SB 10.4.12)

Vasudeva has spoken to me without contradiction, telling the truth.

“My dear brother Nanda Mahārāja, at an advanced age you had no son at all and were hopeless of having one. Therefore, that you now have a son is a sign of great fortune.”

(SB 10.5.23)

Garga in revealing the truth also told me this and revealed the inner cause.

“For many reasons, this beautiful son of yours sometimes appeared previously as the son of Vasudeva.” (SB 10.8.14)

[24] In any case such claims increase our happiness since exalted people show parental affection for our child.

[25] And further there is no difference between me and Vasudeva and between Yaśodā and Devakī. Thus their claims are acceptable.

O son! Fear arises in Mathurā because of demons. Fear arises in Vraja because of possible separation from you. These two fears exist. Thus my mind is troubled. ||2||

[26] Anyway, we must help them for we should do what Nārada and Garga advised. Considering this I did not prevent you from going to Mathurā. It is said that Daśaratha sent his son at a young age to kill the Rākṣasas to protect the sages, and at another time finally died during his son's stay in the forest for fourteen years. Saying this, stopping his tears, he embraced his son and gazed at his face.

[27] Coming close to his father, Kṛṣṇa said in a choked voice: "O father! You should have no doubt that all the evil rascals will be killed. Many times Garga promised a good result to my father. One time in a solitary place at the edge of a forest Nārada also told me this. O father! Where I stay will be the place where the great souls will worship me. This will be near the assembly of cowherds, and not with the Yadus. The cowherds are my relatives and the Yadus are my friends. This is the difference between relatives and friends. I sometimes reside near my friends to help them. I always live with my relatives with the happiness of seeing them."

[28] When Kṛṣṇa said this, Balarāma, reflecting as a cowherd, said, "O father! With great affection you cared for us and raised us. What can be said? Parents have more affection for their children than for themselves."

[29] Confirming this, Kṛṣṇa spoke:

Not only am I your son. You are the father of Balarāma because of rules of *dharma*:

sa pitā sā ca jananī yau c sva-putravat |
śiśūn bandhubhir utsṛṣṭān akalpaiḥ poṣa-rakṣaṇe ||

> They are the real father and mother who care for, as they would their own sons, children abandoned by relatives unable to maintain and protect them. SB 10.45.22

[30] Your caring for Balarāma has been the best. I have come to your feet in order to give happiness to all friends.

[31] Nanda said, “O child! We will stay here.”

[32] Kṛṣṇa said, “O father! You should act such that mother does not feel pain, being alone, separated from you.”

[33] Nanda said, “Shall I bring her close to you?”

[34] Kṛṣṇa said, “If you do, then all Gokula will be destroyed.”

[35] Nanda said, “Then I will bring all of Vraja here.”

[36 - 37] Kṛṣṇa said, “Our cows have now become uncountable in numbers, multiplying daily. Will the groves in the city maintain them? The cows are our deities and they must be served. If you think that everything is for me and without me it is useless, since the cows are my life, they have to be maintained. The Yadus will not say anything against me. It is clear that at the insistence of Jarāsandha who developed a relationship with Kaṃsa, millions of rascals with great armies will attack Mathurā. A condemned act will take place. We are so close. If we were far away and our relationship with the Yadus was not known, it would not bring difficulties. If however our relationship with them is known through spies, Jarāsandha and his cohorts will not be afraid like Kaṃsa. They will not send strong enemies like Putana one at a time. They will come with

all their armies and cause destruction in Vraja. You should thus hide our relationship with you. Not a trace of relationship should be shown. I will establish the Yadus in a fort. But you have unlimited population so I cannot do that for you. It will be impossible to protect unlimited cows in a fort. Thus I will show indifference towards you in order to protect you. This will be just like a fortress."

[38] "This should be done until all the enemies are killed and I return to Vraja. When I return, I will not leave because how can the purest goal of life with the fruit of happiness of seeing you, the topmost people, possessing pure, intense affection be obstructed? I request that all that I have elaborately revealed should be followed. In summary:

> *yāta yūyaṃ vrajaṃ tāta vayaṃ ca sneha-duḥkhitān |*
> *jñātīn vo draṣṭum eṣyāmo vidhāya suhṛdāṃ sukham ||*
>
> Now you should all return to Vraja, dear father. We shall come to see you, our dear relatives who suffer in separation from us, as soon as we have given some happiness to your well-wishing friends." SB 10.45.23

[39] After Madhukaṇṭha said this, looking at his brother he said, "In the above verse, Kṛṣṇa used the word *tāta (*father). By this address to Nanda, he suitably indicated his internal mood as Nanda's son. He used the words *jñātīn sneha-duḥkhitān* (relatives suffering because of affection) to indicate that, since their affection was without limits, at every moment the chief residents desired to see him and at every moment he let them see him. The word *vayam* (we) indicates two persons also according to Pāṇinī. Thus not only Kṛṣṇa, but Balarāma will also return. 'We desire to see (*draṣṭum)*. Just as we desire to see them, they desire to see us as the goal of

their lives.’ There is the following verse illustrating the use of *viboddhum* (to understand):

One whose heart has become completely purified, my Lord, can understand the transcendental qualities of your Lordship and can understand the greatness of your activities. SB 10.14.6

Just as *viboddhum* means ‘to become the object of understanding’, so *draṣṭum* means ‘to become the object of sight.’ Thus the meaning confirms the previous explanation: I will come to see my relatives and to be seen by them. The word *suhṛdām* refers to the Yadus, who are not relatives. This indicates that they should thus be helped but nothing more is indicated. In the phrase *sukhaṃ vidhāya, vidhāya* (producing) is in the participle form, to indicate a limit. ‘After producing happiness for the Yadus, by destroying causes of fear, and not doing anything else, I will return.’”

[40] Snigdhakaṇṭha asked with excitement, “So what did the respected Nanda do?”

[41] Though not pleased with his logical words, thinking they were correct, he beat his forehead and spoke unclearly with tears, “Your mother will be opposed. How will I make her understand?”

[42] Kṛṣṇa said, “I will inform her with great respect through dear friends.” Saying this he wrote a letter in his own hand and gave it to Śrīdāma.

[43] Śrīdāma, observing Nanda’s obedience and the misery expressed in the introductory portion of the letter, put the letter down and spoke with a choked voice what should be spoken: “Fearing trouble from the demons we will not go there. But by the strength of the

service of your father, I will go in the morning with my brother.”

The letter was as follows:

On the first day there is rice with milk. On the second day there is *rotī* with ghee. The next day there is sweets soaked in sweet milk. On other days there are various foods. O mother! You feed me all these foods in the large room and serve me also. Do not think this is a dream or a temporary appearance. Understand that it is actual. ||3||

O mother! As long as you do not eat I shall not eat. If I become aware that I have eaten, my heart will quickly dry up. I will go to Vraja and see my mother and others like her. I will come after killing the enemies. It will not be long. I am eager to kill the enemies with my show of strength. ||4||

[44] Hearing this, the messenger with tears in his eyes said, “Truly Yaśodā speaks of your present eating with tears in her eyes, as if in a dream. She conceals the fact that she does not eat, fearing that it will cause you suffering.”

[45] When the others heard this, they stood there in astonishment. Nanda spoke with tears in his eyes: “How will your friends who depend on your love maintain their lives?”

[46] Kṛṣṇa said, “Like my mother all my dear friends can attain me by seeing. But because of great *vātsalya* as a mother, she will see me as if in a dream. This will not be so for my friends filled with *praṇaya* (friendly affection).”

[47] Nanda said, “Like your friends, will the cows be able to directly hear you?”

[48] Kṛṣṇa said, “Though seeing my *sphūrti* will relieve the cows of suffering I will use another means in order to produce external awareness. The cows operate mainly by smell and sound. They also discern by form. Stoka-kṛṣṇa should wrap himself in my cloth laden with fragrance and play the flute. Subala should dress in Balarāma’s blue cloth and take his horn. They should sit among the cows. All the boys with qualities like mine will substitute for Stoka-kṛṣṇa and Subala. The fortunate animals and trees of the forest worshiped by all will see my *sphūrti*. Thus everything will be adjusted.”

[49] Seeing his servants—the *śūdras, abhīras*, and young boys without discriminating power—and Nanda standing silently, Kṛṣṇa with tears in his eyes said, “Since they are all affectionate like my friends or my father and the elders, they will attain service following the elders and be praiseworthy.”

[50] He spoke to Madhumaṅgala with affection: “Oh! You also go. As my representative, since I have unexpectedly left, serve Paurṇamāsī for my auspiciousness and produce full happiness as before.”

[51] With that display of affection, he gave Stoka-kṛṣṇa and Subala, who were endowed with his own qualities, his clothing filled with the scent of his limbs, and decorated them properly with his ornaments. Honoring his servants suitably, he informed the elders of their services. Taking their permission, he remained there. Bringing in the *brāhmaṇas* of Mathurā who were standing outside the meeting, he sent them to inform the Yadus. Then Nanda and the others went to Vraja.

[52] Vasudeva, Ugrasena and others came there with great happiness. Arriving, Kṛṣṇa worshiped them with

offerings of attractive clothing and following after them, entered the town while chatting with them pleasantly.

[53] Kṛṣṇa who had previously refused the kingdom, gave the people of Vraja items they had brought as gifts and which had been taken by Kaṃsa and then retrieved, except for items made of base metal. He feared his agitation because of closeness to them. Taking leave of Nanda and the elders, feeling an indescribable sensation spreading through his mind, he returned to the city. Balarāma however followed them for a great distance.

[54] Though stunned within, Nanda spoke to Balarāma out of good training, like a liberated soul: “O child dear to my son! Now being all alone, our life airs have given up all mental powers. Therefore follow your brother.”

[55] Fearing his separation from Kṛṣṇa would be a cause of further suffering, Balarāma took leave of everyone with determination and on meeting his brother sought out a solitary spot. They embraced each other and wept together. What more can be described?

Remembering Kṛṣṇa, Balarāma, Nanda, the cowherds, Śrīdāma and his friends and all the attendants—after Kaṃsa was killed and the people of Vraja returned home—my mind now gives up everything because of the pain, fearing further separation. ||5||

[56] After saying this, understanding the pain of Nanda and others, he again spoke: “O Nanda! Kṛṣṇa who increased your desire strongly during earthly pastimes personally plays on your lap.” ||6||

[57] Placing his head on Nanda’s feet, Kṛṣṇa said with regret, “Ah! This creature talks nonsense and cheats his father. You should forgive my great offense. Though

one’s limb may give pain, no one desires to give up that limb.” ||7||

Nanda, his hairs standing on end, embraced his son. Everyone’s hairs stood on end out of deep bliss. ||8||

[58] After finishing the morning recitation, Madhukaṇṭha spoke to Rādhā’s gathering near Kṛṣṇa’s feet (in the evening).

[59] All the obstacles in coming to Vraja, manifested by his *līlā-śakti*, should be considered to be filled with his shame which was previously mentioned. Kṛṣṇa, revealing his shame later, engaged Subala who came from Mathurā with attractive words for his beloved *gopīs:*

Yes, I gave you up, whose life airs, following after me, left your bodies without a trace. I have no legitimacy. O friends! Hear what I have to say. Your incomparable love which breaks all conventions shames me. It makes me hide this body lacking such love as yours. But I am never far away. ||9||

How can I hide the fact that I am obviously in Mathurā? But a form like a shadow plays here, and the real form plays in Vraja. When someone becomes completely absorbed in something, the person manifests his form in that absorbed state. He experiences that he is that manifested form. The shadow form is not like that. ||10||

O Candrāvalī! Mistaking the dark moon night for the full moon because of your effulgence, you fainted from the fever of separation and developed pain in all your limbs. Glowing with the brilliance of a sapphire, I embraced you. You were astonished how your body changed its condition completely. ||11||

O Candrāvalī! On the first lunar day you wanted to show pride. O Lalitā! You met me at the edge of the forest. O Pālī! You were getting ready to receive me. O Viśākhā! You introduced me to Rādhā. I have said a little to make you understand. Much else should be understood. How can you think it was a dream and torture your minds–and torture me, sitting in Mathurā? ||12||

O Padmā! O Bhadrā! O Śaibyā! When your three forms, with distressed hearts, rolled about near the *tamāla* tree out of separation from me, I was there. As I came close and embraced your limbs, the old angry women came from somewhere. Because of that, sorrow does not leave me. ||13||

O Rādhā! When I revealed I would go to Mathurā one day, you fainted. I embraced you, kissed you and led you to a forest near the mountain. How can you forget that? When all the women came there making a commotion, we fled in different directions. Do you not remember that? ||14||

O Rādhā! It is not a dream that you are on my bed in Mathurā sleeping, for the sheet is laden with your fragrance. Let that topic rest. Today, a blind man, with a slight smile on his face, enjoys the fragrance of the jewel among women, a fragrance meant for my limbs, and shakes his head slightly in astonishment. ||15||

Let the previous news be! Today, under oath, thoroughly question Śyāmalā, whose beauty is adorned with marks on her breasts. Though I sport daily with the women–if you want to know clearly if I will come quickly–when all obstacles have been destroyed, I will come. ||16||

[60] Going this far, Madhukaṇṭha said in conclusion, “O Rādhā! As a bee greedy for fragrance and honey

decorates the lotus, truthful Kṛṣṇa decorates you. O Rādhā! When your meeting in a dream actually occurs like the meeting of Ūśā and Aniruddha, how can separation occur?” ||17 - 18||

With complete auspiciousness and thick bliss spreading everywhere, the two excellent reciters took permission and left. Kṛṣṇa, shining in all his limbs with the association of Rādhā, decorated the beauty of the pleasing bed. ||19||

Chapter Seven

Nanda’s Return to Vraja

[1] In Nanda’s assembly with Kṛṣṇa present, Snigdhakaṇṭha began the morning recitation.

[2] Nanda had messengers deliver Kṛṣṇa’s painful advice to Upananda and others previous to his arrival. When the news arrived instructing them to bear the intolerable proposal through Nanda’s messengers, Upananda and others, thinking that Kṛṣṇa could do nothing except return, since they were bound by ropes of expectation of his return, met with others in a huge gathering in an attractive elevated area. What can be said? Waiting for Nanda’s arrival, crowded closely together, the older and younger women, the attendant girls, and Yaśodā, giving up shyness, stood a little apart. Seeing from far off the despondent arrival of Nanda and his followers, devoid of all action, they attained a most lamentable condition.

[3] When Nanda arrived and they met, sober Nanda began describing Kṛṣṇa’s auspicious victory in order to dissipate the mental anguish of his relatives.

[4] After hearing what Kṛṣṇa had advised, the wise, whose only happiness was that Kṛṣṇa should be happy, spoke, “That is fine. We must bear our own suffering and bear his actions.”

[5] Not able to bear Yaśodā’s inability to accept Kṛṣṇa’s staying in Mathurā, when Kṛṣṇa’s closest friends made the proposal, Nanda had someone read her the letter

that Kṛṣṇa had written for her, while all listened with longing.

[6] His letter beginning, “On the first day there was rice with milk” (*Uttara Campū* 6.3) caused astonishment and appeasement. When the letter was read, all stood for a *daṇḍa* (24 minutes) with hot and cold tears flowing from their eyes to their cheeks. What to speak of Yaśodā!

[7] Upananda began speaking soberly, “Though we feel pain in separation from him we cannot independently do anything else. We must follow his advice. From his infancy, true to his word, he protected everyone. Because of him, we neglected sacrifice to Indra. What to speak of now? Getting up, we should all do as he has instructed.”

Hearing this news from a messenger, Kṛṣṇa became happy.

[8] Hearing the reasonable words of Upananda, everyone said, “Acting like this, Kṛṣṇa will return. In order to please him we should follow his instructions. It is said that when Rāma went to the forest for a long time, Bharata and others, surviving on cow urine and barley, not knowing in which forest he lived, waited for his return. Should we not respect his advice since he will give up the kingdom earned, after conquering the demons that have defeated the three worlds? Is it not attractive that we, his well-wishers, call him for tending the cows as a cowherd? Though he gave up a kingdom he has attained control of all kingdoms. But we must dissipate his sorrow by quickly sending a secret letter.”

[9] Nanda said, “That is a good proposal. After asking his mother, make a reply.”

[10] They asked Yaśodā and wrote the following letter:

O moon in the ocean of Vraja! All the people of Vraja and your mother will follow the orders you have given. No one will delay. O Kṛṣṇa! The beauty of your face is worth millions of our lives. But our desire to see your beauty with our unsteady eyes does not respect that order. ||1||

Yes, on those days I had prepared those meals. Though this all appeared in my heart, I was not satisfied with this. O son! Out of this illusion, I had no opportunity for full satisfaction. Thus my heart burns within. ||2||

[11] Out of sorrow, Nanda, who previously had nothing to say directly, wrote a letter to Vasudeva:

In giving me the seventh child, you did not cause me to see difference between us. Let the eighth child also be yours. You should care for both. ||3||

[12] Sending the letter, acting as the representatives of Kṛṣṇa's orders, the wise elders assigned Nanda and the others to their daily duties after feeding them. Though they felt inner pain, they performed actions suitable to the situation because of previous habit, as if they had attained realization of Brahman. It is not necessary to describe further their absent minded actions and forms. Please listen to what I say now.

"O Nanda! He who brings your eyes to life, he who destroyed the dense darkness of Kaṃsa, is present here, the head ornament of your dynasty, shining like the eastern mountain." ||4||

Yaśodā, bringing him towards her, held Kṛṣṇa, in her lap for a long time, while he bowed his head. While his hairs stood on end, she showered him with her tears and breast milk and attained bliss. ||5||

[13] When the morning recital was finished, Snigdhakaṇṭha later spoke to the gathering where Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa presided.

[14] Subala brought Kṛṣṇa's message to the people of Vraja but did not deliver it to the *gopīs* since they were weak with the fire of separation on learning that he would not return soon.

[15] The fire of separation of Rādhā is described:

Rādhā began asking the trees about Kṛṣṇa. She watched the path by which he would arrive. She identified her body with his. She thought all things were false. She began shouting. She wept uncontrollably. She drooled and lost consciousness. She danced while laughing loudly. If that was her condition, how could he give her the message? ||6||

Seeing a crow flying from the east, she asked it about his coming from Mathurā. Gathering with her friends, she went to Subala, the friend of Kṛṣṇa. ||7||

Seeing Subala, they fainted and remained unconscious for a long time. On recovering consciousness, they could not recall what they had asked him. They could not take the letter with the introduction because their eyes were blinded with tears. When he read the message, they began to listen to it. ||8||

The letter began with "Yes, I left you." This is found *Uttara* C*ampū* 6.9:

Yes, I gave you up, whose live airs, following after me, left your bodies without a trace. I have no legitimacy. O friends! Hear what I have to say. Your incomparable love which breaks all conventions shames me. It makes me

hide this body lacking such love as yours. But I am never far away.

[16] Understanding their condition, Subala asked for a reply. Filling it with tearful statements and using their own writing, they completed the letter. Putting it in an envelope, they sent it to Kṛṣṇa.

[17] The response:

O Kṛṣṇa! We are now meeting with you as you stated in your message. But the rumor that you will stay in Mathurā devours us. ||9||

O beloved! You have said that you will come and meet us often in your *sphūrti.* Though that is true, separation from you agitates our hearts. ||10||

It is true you will come to Vraja to give happiness to the people of Vraja. But, that short time of absence is like a *kalpa* to us. ||11||

[18] The response concluded with words from Rādhā's *sakhīs:*

In Mathurā there are doctors as expert as Dhanvantari. Please inquire from them about a powerful medicine to counteract madness, epilepsy and death. ||12||

[19] Noting their words were full of sorrow, Snigdhakaṇṭha concluded by saying with enthusiasm, "Ah! Ah! These words in separation from Kṛṣṇa are painful to us. O doe-eyed woman! We will be happy when you meet Kṛṣṇa here." ||13||

[20] When the sacrifice of evening topics had extended this far, the reciters, making all happy, went to their residence.

In the first year after meeting, Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa were like a huge tree and a fresh, attractive creeper

embracing each other firmly with their branches. They enjoyed fully as they performed blissful pastimes in the forest. ||14||

Chapter Eight

Learning the Sixty-four Subjects

[1] In Nanda's assembly with Kṛṣṇa present, Madhukaṇṭha began the morning session.

[2] Receiving the letter from Vraja, Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma heard the news and were relieved of worry. Since childhood the two boys had not been trained. Seeing that they did not know how to make requests properly to Devakī as a mother, Vasudeva conferred with his wife. The two however had regard for Rohiṇī as their mother.

Vasudeva sent a messenger to Sannanda and Nandana. Taking the letter, the messenger went to Vraja. Let the contents of the letter, praising their qualities remain without being discussed. However, the following was in the letter: "I did not think of it when you were leaving Mathurā but it is desirable that Rohiṇī come here." Hearing that, Rohiṇī became disturbed.

I cannot ignore the order of my husband and cannot give up the desire to see Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma. Oh! But how can I give up Yaśodā? If the creator were to take each limb of my body and give it separate life I would be delivered. ||1||

[3] Seeing Rohiṇī's disturbance, Yaśodā spoke, "I think the creator has divided one body into you and me, but with only one life air. Therefore we do not distinguish between the two sons. Ah! Mother of Balarāma! If I

cannot go and see them by my bad luck, then you should quickly go there and bring me to life.” ||2||

[4] The elder women counseled Yaśodā with logical words. Then, finding an auspicious moment through astrologers, filling carts with piles of ingredients, with regret they followed Rohiṇī for a great distance and embraced her with choked throats. With difficulty, they left her while lamenting and returned home. Yaśodā sent a variety of favorite foods and clothing for Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma. In a choked voice she said, “Please send the main pleasing news of the two boys and give this message to Devakī:

O Devakī! Everyone understands that we are non-different. That non-difference has manifested in Kṛṣṇa. Thus there is no difference if we both say, ‘He is my son.’” ||3||

[5] “Filled with great pain on remembering Vraja, my heart becomes disturbed. To dissipate that sorrow it is not necessary to carry on elaborate discussions.” Leaving the topic, Madhukaṇṭha then spoke in conclusion.

“O Nanda! This topic should not be spoken. It would be spoken if I do not see your son in your lap now.” ||4||

[6] When all became happy, Snigdhakaṇṭha asked, “Then what happened? Please describe this.”

[7] Madhukaṇṭha said:

When Rohiṇī arrived in Mathurā, Balarāma and Kṛṣṇa offered respects and met her. Yaśodā appeared there vividly. She appeared in the mind of not only the two sons but in the mind of Rohiṇī as well. The conduct of

prema is beyond intelligence. See its astonishing nature. ||5||

Ah! When Kṛṣṇa fell at Rohiṇī's feet, Yaśodā appeared in his heart. He cried and Rohiṇī in the same mood cried like an osprey. ||6||

After Kṛṣṇa with tears heard of Yaśodā's actions on the day before separation, Balarāma inquired from Rohiṇī and she revealed the non-difference of herself and Yaśodā. ||7||

[8] On another day when Rohiṇī met her co-wives along with Vasudeva, she spoke while understanding they did not want to hear about Kṛṣṇa in Vraja.

Affection personified in this universe is Kṛṣṇa in Vraja. It is also strongly evident in Yaśodā there. If Kṛṣṇa is your son, what fault is there for Vraja (in also claiming him as their son)? ||8||

[9] When Vasudeva and Devakī, not wanting to hear this, remained silent, other women laughing said, "O Rohiṇī! You are greedy for the yogurt and milk of the cowherds. Therefore your words are not unsuitable."

[10] Hearing this and understanding their minds, and feeling remorse for Yaśodā, she remained silent.

[11] When Vasudeva was determined to have the sacred thread ceremony, Rohiṇī did not propose bringing the people of Vraja.

[12] Though Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma were eager for this ceremony–understanding that the Yadus were rather indifferent to the people of Vraja in their minds and actions, and considering it would be painful for the Vraja people–they decided not to invite them, though all citizens were invited. What is the use of our wanting to

describe this event to them? But through Sudāma, the garland maker, they had Nanda hear a sweet letter:

O father!Tomorrow in the morning the Yadus will accept us as their sons by the sacred thread ceremony, showing us to be *kṣatriyas.* I will accept this external show as a *kṣatriya* but internally I am still a cowherd. Ah! Previously I said that I would come to see you, my relatives. How can I, your son, do the opposite with my tongue? ||9||

O Nanda! Do not lament that you will not be present at the sacred thread ceremony. In Mathurā I hide my real nature for the benefit of your friends the Yadus. Perform the *gāyatrī* initiation ceremony for my Vraja friends who are my very form and make my vow complete. ||10||

[13] Hearing this letter, Nanda, Upananda and others began to think. “From this letter, combined with the previous advice, it seems that he is not indifferent to us. We have already thought that we should perform this ceremony, which is recommended for us *vaiśyas.* Therefore we will perform the ceremony using his friends who are his representatives––who are one with him internally but identify themselves otherwise externally.”

[14] Snigdhakaṇṭha said, “Please describe the actions.”

[15] Madhukaṇṭha said:

When the ceremony for second birth was completed in both places, the two boys wanted to learn the four Vedas and their *aṅgas.* They decided that they should follow the same process as others do. “According to the ancient sages one should study by going to the *gurukula.* Though Vyāsa and others of great stature would be suitable as *gurus* and are well known, they will think that we two

already have all knowledge. Therefore they will show some hesitation to be our *guru*. They are the highest Vaiṣṇavas and have realized the Vaiṣṇava philosophy. We should study and that will be attractive. Though we have knowledge by our natures, it is best that we go to the *gurukula.* If we break the rules it will not be auspicious for the world. A person who is fixed in Brahman and worships Śiva would be the best *guru*. The great soul Sāndīpani of a dynasty from Kāśī is a worshiper of Śiva. He previously went to Prabhāsa and now lives in Avanti, a place emanating happiness and near to a Śiva temple. We should go there, but in such a way that others do not know. Otherwise, if it is widely known that we have gone far away, the enemies will give problems to the Yadus. And people of Vraja from our father's family down to the paid servants will give up their bodies. What to speak of your mother Yaśodā who displays the most intense pain to all people."

[16 - 17] After considering in this way, the two made a plan to inform the Yadus and fool all others. They decided to fool everyone by making a show of performing vows alone in their houses. Thus, going far away, secretly, will prevent others from coming. Kṛṣṇa spoke to Vasudeva, Devakī and Rohiṇī, who were filled with sorrow:

If Balarāma is with me, then ten million people will come. If I am with Balarāma a hundred million people will come. ||11||

We derive unlimited power from your blessings. With those blessings, who in the three worlds can defeat us? ||12||

[18] Hearing this Vasudeva and Devakī became relieved because of the boys' powers but Rohiṇī was full of grief. I will now describe their life in the *gurukula.*

On the path, Kṛṣṇa saw some *brāhmaṇas* wearing red cloth, who knew his intentions. Seeing Kṛṣṇa, they were eager to give him their begged food but he did not accept. ||13||

Since one should not accept a vehicle until *brahmacārī* life is finished the two brothers accepted their own strength as their carriage (they walked.) ||14||

Kṛṣṇa, along with Balarāma, saw many picturesque villages on the way. When they saw cowherd villages they would stop there for the night and become stunned. Eventually they arrived at Avantī. ||15||

Though dressed in *brahmacārī* clothing, they attracted all people's eyes because of their effulgence. But no one could recognize them. ||16||

When the people of Avantī saw Balarāma they recognized the highest light, but when they saw Kṛṣṇa they were puzzled whether it was light or darkness. ||17||

Wherever Kṛṣṇa went, Yaśodā's affection found him, dark like a cloud. In those places the hearts of the people of the town and all beings in the forest melted. ||18||

"He will increase his beauty on the lap of some fortunate crest jewel among woman. He will play displaying his arts on the breasts of some woman." He was pleased to hear women speculate about him in this way, but he plugged his ears, afraid of developing a desire for them. ||19||

[19] Separated from their friends in order to hide their identity, they went to the assembly of Sāndīpani who was blissful with all knowledge. The gathering began to speculate about the two boys. “If these two are not equal to Kārtikeya, capable of destroying all darkness, they must be a dark monsoon cloud and an autumn white cloud. We can compare them to the sun and the moon, but that comparison does not do them justice. One shines with black splendor, and destroys the comparison completely.” ||20||

Wearing two pieces of silk cloth, *kuśa* rings, sacred threads, grass belts made of *mūrva,* deer skin and holding *khadira* staffs, Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma endowed with auspicious natures entered the assembly of the *guru* as true *brahmacarīs* endowed with *kṣatriya* aura. ||21||

Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma entered into the assembly of Sāndīpani resplendent with thousands of *brāhmaṇas*, like the sun and moon entering the sky with Jupiter (guru) and all the stars. ||22||

Seeing their symptoms of being kings, the members did not rise up. That seemed to be proper because in front of great persons inferiors should not have elevated status. ||23||

Though their bodies did not offer respect because of their pride as *brāhmaṇas,* the beauty of the two boys, becoming warm, melted their hearts. ||24||

[20] Filled with strong devotion, displaying power as they held fire wood in their hands and begging for knowledge, they impressed Sāndīpani. Introducing themselves by their *varṇa* and *gotra,* calling themselves

“the white and the black” they offered respects with devotion.

[21] Offering respect they said, “Possessor of all opulence, born of a great family! O crown jewel of *brāhmaṇas*! Ocean of knowledge, endowed with the truth of Vedic *dharma*! We surrender to your feet. Deliver us from suffering due to ignorance.” ||25||

Because they were incognito, they did not offer gifts, but they did offer a variety of pure forest fruits brought from a distance. ||26||

On being questioned by the *guru*, they replied in a disguised manner that they were the sons of a person of the Yadu dynasty famous as a gem (*vasu*). ||27||

Their cleverness made everyone also understand the truth from the secondary characteristics since that cleverness of concealment produced the best results. ||28||

Greeting them, Sāndīpani said, “Time for study is very rare. O dedicated students! I will keep you here for a long time to study.” ||29||

[22] Sāndīpani continued, “Giving up your identity as *kṣatriyas,* you must first learn how to beg with the *brāhmaṇa* students.”

[23] Accepting the two and having them leave, the *guru* then spoke to those present:

Seeing these boys my heart develops affection (*snigdha*). I can clearly conclude that since birth they have lived with butter and other soft substances (*snigdha*—or in affectionate conditions) and thus internally and externally are oozing with affection. ||30||

Though the white and the black one are filled with affection, my intelligence concludes that the white one is the root. ||31||

Surpassing all the marks of greatness mentioned in the scriptures describing auspicious bodily features, the white and black are worthy of worship. The effulgence of the white one bewilders my intelligence. ||32||

[24] When they all went for begging food, the two boys were actually the life maintenance of all.

Since the two boys in going with the others needed nothing, the others begged and carried the food. ||33||

But when the two begged, things reversed. When they begged, the householders gave just on seeing them. ||34||

The two did not look at the young women donors as mothers, but the women, though in the prime of youth, looked at them with motherly affection. ||35||

[25] The two boys went begging to all the places with which the other students were acquainted. It was improper to go to other places. Since the two followed proper conduct, they joined the others in order to conceal what they had renounced and feigned ignorance of the places where the other boys accompanying them had previously approached for food.

[26] On the pretext of following the *guru's* order, gaining respect daily, they would bring increasing amounts of begged food and other articles to the *guru*. Distributing the begged goods with excitement, the *guru* developed great attraction for the two boys. Attracted to them, he did not make them work since they were young and

tender. But the two, with great devotion, engaged in excellent work when the *guru* was not present.

[27] One day the *guru's* wife asked, "O master! Among all your students who are the most devoted?"

[28] He said, "The two *kṣatriya* sons."

[29] She said with a smile, "I do not see them serving you."

[30] He said, "Out of affection I forbid them from serving. Visibly they follow the order, but when no one is looking they serve. I have observed this."

[31] One day, seeing unseasonal rain, the wife called some students to bring wood, excluding the two boys, "O sons! Bring wood from somewhere."

[32] The students in fear said, "How can we go to the forest in the afternoon?" Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma heard this. Immediately, with great devotion they went off separately deep into the forest to find the best wood. Seeing them go, the others followed. When they entered the huge forest, heavy rain blocked all visibility. The other students could not join them when this happened. But Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma collected the best wood and, feeling successful, remained there. But since night was approaching they could not return. But why describe further, since it will disturb the people of Vraja who are listening.

[33] After saying this, understanding the lamentation of the people of Vraja, the reciter paused a moment and then continued speaking.

[34] O brother Snigdhakaṇṭha! In the morning Sāndīpani became furiously angry. Castigating his wife, neglecting his morning rites, he went to the forest. Though tired,

the two boys, most attractive in their clothing, carrying the wood and showing devotion to *guru*, were joking with the other students about how they spent the night. They became embarrassed however on seeing their *guru*, who had come there with difficulty through the dense growth of creepers, since their *guru* had heard their joking words. Thus they did not immediately take the wood back.

[35] Giving him happiness, the two bowed their heads to their *guru*. He embraced them with affection and blessed them in his mind that they would have a revelation of all knowledge. He bathed them in a stream of tears. Quickly the two kings of the twice-born, full in all arts and sciences, graduated.

But my life air aches because the creator, known as the bestower of good and bad results to all, who is the friend, bestows what is desired in an appropriate way. That creator, the life of his father and mother, whom Śukadeva, though liberated, glorifies for their parental attachment to him, carried fire wood to satisfy his guru. ||36||

[36] Let that event be. Now we will continue the story. The *guru* took the wood, put it on the heads of other students, and returned home. Arranging the wood with his wife, he made the students study.

[37] The activities of the teacher, outstanding because of his fatherly attitude, purified all minds.

Though there were hundreds of students with equal qualities, Kṛṣṇa was attracted to Śrīdāma Śarma since he had the same name as his dear friend in Vraja, just as he showed affection for Pāṇḍava Arjuna and for Sudāma, the garland maker. ||37||

[38 - 39] Please consider one remarkable thing. In that group Śrīdāma and others applied themselves to studies with Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma, but what can come of such efforts?

There were many students who came to study under the *guru* with Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma but can the swans who think they are most beautiful associate with Garuḍa? ||38||

Living as *brahmacarīs,* Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma, though in the introductory class, defeated all those versed in the Vedas and even those who had graduated. ||39||

Studying only once, they learned all the Vedas and were praised by all others who had studied many times. ||40||

In sixty–four days the two boys mastered the sixty-four branches of knowledge, placing that knowledge in their hearts like pictures, since in their hearts lay the whole universe, which their *guru* could not understand. ||41||

It is well know that Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma learned from Sāndīpani and Sāndīpani gave up many errors in knowledge because of them. ||42||

[40] I will describe the mental attitude of two as they mastered all subjects.

While staying in the *gurukula,* in the evening while lying in bed, Kṛṣṇa would talk with Balarāma about Vraja. When I remember how he would continuously talk about Vraja in his sleep, the lotus of my heart burns. ||43||

O brother! In order to forget the topics of Vraja I am carefully recalling all the topics about the people of Mathurā. But those topics make me remember Vraja. Hearing the word “mother” I think of Yaśodā. Hearing the word “father” I remember only Nanda in Vraja.

Hearing the word “friend” I think only of my cowherd friends. What should I do? How should I pass my time? ||44||

Mother is remembering me now. Father, with a weak body, getting up from bed, is remembering me. They stay together in the house. Since his body is on fire, how can friends embrace him? Who desires to fall into that fire? ||45||

What to speak of remembering my mother, father and friends, remembrance of Vraja burns my heart completely! ||46||

[41] With tears in his eyes, Balarāma consoled him, “O brother! Giving up everything, I want to go there. Showing some restraint, you should conceal your feelings. When you remember them in order to gain consolation, you immediately forget everything else, for without going there you see them.”

[42] Kṛṣṇa said, “Ah! It is true. It is true. Seeing them as if in a dream, I experience them as reality. What can I do?”

[43] The reciter said, “Embracing each other with tears in their eyes they fell asleep. Nothing more need be said.”

He continued, “O Nanda! Whatever was seen as a *sphūrti* is seen directly now. You and Kṛṣṇa are here in the assembly.” ||47||

[44] After the reciter pleased all in the morning recitation, the *sakhīs* and Rādhā felt nourished by attaining Kṛṣṇa in the evening recitation.

[45] Madhukaṇṭha spoke:

Kṛṣṇa, the ocean of *anurāga* for the *gopīs,* on waking began to consider:

Oh! I see a dream like the *rāsa* dance everywhere. This is not a dream, for my limbs are fragrant with the *gopīs'* perfume. My *brahmacārī* life is finished! This was not intentional. Therefore I have no fault. Rather they were delivered from the fire of separation. ||48||

[46] Actually serving these *gopīs* who are my life is not contrary to *brahmacārī* life. Durvāsā revealer of the *Gopāla-tāpanī Upaniṣad* has revealed this (He said, "He will be your husband.")

[47] Concluding the evening topics of suitable subject, Madhukaṇṭha said, "O Rādhā! Your life, Kṛṣṇa, always thinks of you. If he goes for some other job and returns, do not find fault with him." ||49||

[48] Showing Kṛṣṇa to Rādhā and making her happy, the two reciters as usual went to their residences with the others. Kṛṣṇa stayed in the house of pastimes with Rādhā with great joy.

Chapter Nine

Retrieving His Guru’s Son

[1] The recitation took place at the edge of Nanda’s place made glorious by Kṛṣṇa’s presence. Snigdhakaṇṭha spoke.

[2] When they had completed study of the Vedas with their *aṅgas* and all the arts, the *guru* performed the two boys’ graduation ceremony. The people of Avantī, desiring to hold a festival on that occasion, gathered together and came with the best cloth and ornaments. Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma looked glorious in the ornaments and cloth.

[3] The powerful boys wanted to give their *guru* a perfect gift. Having completed the rituals, the *guru*, ascertaining their desire, carefully consulted with his wife and then asked for the boon of his eldest son who had previously disappeared in the ocean.

[4] O Nanda! Hearing this, the ocean of all arts, the moon of his dynasty, Kṛṣṇa, with a pleasant nature, feeling happy, spoke, “This is the nature of great souls. Though they perfectly serve, they are shy and they desire little service from their servants whom they support. You desire to make us famous by your fatherly attachment. But the knowledge you gave us will produce all the results.” ||1 - 2||

Offering respects to the *guru* and his wife, showing the people the greatness of their *guru* by displaying their

knowledge, fastening their waistbands strong as thunderbolts from heaven, they quickly concentrated their minds. ||3||

[5] Following the order of *guru*, the two quickly went to the ocean near Prabhāsa on a chariot with a driver. They arrived quickly. Then, seeing the broad expanse of the ocean for the first time, in excitement they reflected. Ah! The ocean which spreads out water spreads wide the beholder's eyes. It seems that the ocean is happy to see us and is offering respect.

The ocean is coming close to embrace us, by those rolling waves. He is smiling by his many balls of foam. He is spreading his nostrils wide to smell by the forms of *makaras in* the waves. Marked with thousands of turtles with raised backs, appearing to be eyes, he is looking at us. With the sound of millions of clouds rumbling, he is playing welcoming music. He is dancing, expressing various emotions with his limbs, by means of his waves. The ocean is making an offering with his folded hands by the whirlpools which reveal gems rare for endeavoring kings who have conquered all enemies.

[6 - 7] After making these analogies and looking at the ocean, the ocean, conforming to the description given, became visible. As the boys watched, the ocean offered respects, folded his hands and spoke in a choked voice, "Varuṇa has instructed me by his mercy. He said:

'You are the salt water ocean. There are many oceans such as the sugar juice oceans. But Kṛṣṇa is the one ocean of mercy with no boundaries'. ||4||

The characteristics that Varuṇa described are seen in you. You and your elder brother shine like a mass of

fame incarnate. Please give me an order. What should the servant of the servant do?”

[8] Kṛṣṇa said, “Please tell us where the remains of our *guru’*s son are lying.”

[9] The ocean said, “I worship the tips of your toe nails with my head. But the son went into the belly of the shell fish Pañcajana. Who knows if he is there now?”

[10] Kṛṣṇa said, “If you give permission I will bring the son out of his belly.”

[11] The ocean said, “What I will say will be most audacious. But whatever the great souls desire will be accomplished.”

[12] Kṛṣṇa said to Balarāma, “O respected brother! Please stay in the chariot.”

[13] Saying this, without lamentation, Kṛṣṇa dove into the ocean and came to a place near the conch king’s house accompanied by the ocean. Pañcajana saw that Kṛṣṇa resembled the boy he had previously devoured. Kṛṣṇa wanted to grapple with him. The conch acted like Baka and tried to swallow him and ended up vomiting him out and dying. What more can be said? There was a special point to notice however. Though he looked for the boy in the belly of the conch, Kṛṣṇa could not find a trace of any limb. But he made the conch his own possession.

[14] In the Avantī-khaṇḍa, Skanda Purāṇa, it is said:

tataḥ pañca-janaṃ hatvā grāha-rūpaṃ mahāsuram |
tan-madhyasthaṃ sa jagrāha śaṅkhaṃ grastaṃ hi yat purā ||

Killing Pañcajana, the great serpent demon who took possession of the conch as his house previously, Kṛṣṇa grasped him by his middle.

[15] Coming back to his brother he said, “O brother! There is no trace of his body at all there. I will go to where his soul is residing.”

[16] Balarāma said, “Whatever you order.”

[17] Going on the path shown by the ocean, emanating the power of ten million Rudras, Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma went to Yama’s abode to bring Yama under control. From far off, the two heard a very loud, ferocious sound and, coming closer, they saw the cause without trembling. In the *Avantī-khaṇḍa* after blowing the conch, the scene is described.

tena śabdena vitrastāḥ kṛtāntālaya-vāsinaḥ |
narakāntargatā martyāḥ pāpācāra-parāyaṇāḥ ||
sukham āpuḥ praśāntāś ca vahnayaḥ kṛṣṇa-darśanāt |
śastrāṇi kuṇṭhatāṃ prāpur yantrāṇi vividhāni ca ||
vidīrṇāni tadā vyāsa vāsudevasya darśanāt |
asi-patra-vanaṃ nāma śīrṇa-patram ajāyata ||
rauravaṃ nāma narakam arauravam abhūt tadā |
abhairavaṃ bhairavākhyaṃ kumbhīpākam apācakam ||
śṛṅgāṭakam aśṛṅgāṭaṃ loha-sūcy apy asūcitām |
jagāma jagatām īśe prāpte tatra janārdane ||
dustarā sutarā jātā tadā vaitaraṇī nṛṇām |
narakānte tadā yāte tatra viśveṣvare bibhau ||
pāpa-kṣayāt tataḥ sarve vimuktā nārakā narāḥ |
padam avyayam āsādya dṛṣṭvā viṣṇuṃ tamopaham ||
vimānāyuta-sāhasrair ārūḍhās te samantataḥ |
samīkṣya puṇḍarīkāksāṃ muktās te sarva-pātakāt ||

tataḥ śūnyaṃ mune jātaṃ sarvaṃ niraya-maṇḍalam |
darśanāt tasya devasya viṣṇor viṣva-svarūpiṇaḥ ||

By the sound of the conch, the most sinful in hell gave up their fear and became happy. The fires of hell became peaceful on seeing Kṛṣṇa. All the swords became blunt on seeing him and all the torture machines fell apart on seeing him. O Vyāsa! The blades in Asipatra hell broke. Raurava lost its cruelty. The hell called Bhaivara lost its fearful nature. Kumbhipāka hell did not cook anyone. When Kṛṣṇa arrived, the hell in which sinners are thrown from a mountain gave up its terrible nature. The iron needles lost their power of stitching. The Vaitaranī River, which is hard to cross, became easy to cross. When the Lord of the universe arrived everyone became liberated because their sins were destroyed. Seeing Kṛṣṇa, they attained the indestructible abode. Getting on millions of airplanes they looked at the lotus-eyed Lord and became free of all sin. O sage! When everyone saw the lord of lords, the form of the universe, hell became empty.

[18] The narrator spoke in this way, concealing the godly nature of Kṛṣṇa from Nanda and others with pure parental feeling by substituting other names for phrases like “seeing Vāsudeva, they attained liberation.” This had been explained by Garga: the son of Nanda will have qualities similar to Nārāyaṇa. (SB 10.8.19) The reciter continued.

[19] Let us return to the topic. When all the torture stopped in the presence of Kṛṣṇa, Yamarāja seemed happy, for in front of most merciful Kṛṣṇa his cruel nature disappeared.

[20] Seeing Yamarāja with unlimited flowing tears, hairs standing on end, trembling, paralyzed limbs, speaking with choked voice, perspiration forming an ocean, and repeatedly offering respects, Kṛṣṇa began to think:

I am seeing the great devotee Yamarāja. Why do I hear about his bad character? In front of me he is behaving properly. His cruel actions are suitable in relation to the sinful. ||5||

Yamarāja, taking the people opposed to surrendering to me, because of their thirst for enjoying material pleasure, punishes them out of mercy, making them favorable to me. ||6||

[21] As he considered this, Yamarāja, looking at him, spoke:

There is no limit to your mercy. Otherwise why would you glance upon a cruel person like me? That glance is certainly your pastime of mercy since that mercy constantly desires to deliver the fallen. ||7||

Since your name brings peace to hell, you have not come here personally to deliver the hell dwellers. You have some other purpose. Thinking of this, my heart becomes joyful. ||8||

[22] Kṛṣṇa said:

One cannot become free from the results of *prārabdha-karma* without experiencing them. However, by the order of *guru*, I desire to deliver the body of his son. ||9||

Previously you took the son of my *guru*, respecting my order. In doing so, you have not broken the law of *karma*. ||10||

[23] Yamarāja said, “O exalted master! The body which your *guru* saw as his son has been destroyed. I bring the

souls to this place in another body. All the residents here have gone to Svarga now. The remaining person, his son, is undergoing intense suffering. I have kept him here on seeing his terrible *karma*. I must do as the best among the wise orders."

[24] Kṛṣṇa said, "Yamarāja speaks sincerely. Considering this, I split the body of Pañcajana and concentrated on finding a trace of his body. I thought that I would take a particle of his body and resuscitate him. But not finding a trace, I have come here. Anyway, bring him here in whatever condition he is in."

[25] Yamarāja said, "His parents will not be pleased on seeing his present condition. If you order, I will bring him in a body similar to the one he had previously. But I do not see that previous body."

[26] Kṛṣṇa said, "That is alright. All the five elements which left his body can be gathered together again."

[27] Yamarāja said, "I will follow your order."

[28] Saying this and full of joy, Yamarāja went to his inner chambers and returned, showing the previous attractive body of the boy, who followed after him. Seeing him, they felt unlimited bliss, embraced him, and could not be fully satisfied in seeing his face. Yamarāja stood there stunned in fear. After a few moments, he spoke to Kṛṣṇa, who brings peace to hell and who begged permission from Yamarāja.

"O Lord! You did not come here for the *guru*'s son because everything is created by your desire. I think that you have come to show me mercy. If that is so, destroy my association with hell." ||11||

[29] Respecting Kṛṣṇa with these words, decorating the brothers and the *guru*'s son with ornaments, giving gifts, and following them, he then took permission, offered respects and thinking himself successful, returned to his abode with his servants, while dancing.

[30] Looking at Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma, the *guru*'s son, realizing their exquisite beauty, their profuse affection, their sweet words, and that he had regained his previous state by their mercy, he became absorbed in great bliss and gazed at them constantly such that he did not realize the chariot was speedily taking him home.

[31] When Kṛṣṇa returned to the *guru*'s house with Balarāma and the boy, why should I describe only the *guru* and his wife? All the people of the city, sitting near the road with excitement, wondering if the son was coming when they heard the sound of the conch, began loudly chattering in great bliss on seeing the boy standing between Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma. Putting the boy in front, Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma descended from the chariot and with great respect fell at the feet of the overjoyed *guru* and his wife, remaining in that position for a few moments. The husband and wife, crying profusely, embraced them, not recognizing what other object, auspicious or inauspicious, existed.

[32] Absorbed in this way for some time, they then brought the three into their house with prolific, auspicious rites with the approval of all present. They then joyfully fed them.

[33] Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma took from the chariot all the jewels they had obtained from the ocean and Yama's abode and gifted them to the *guru* and his wife.

[34] The local people crowded around for two or three days in order to see Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma, the enemies of Kaṃsa, now suitably respected. The details about the boys became known by some Mathurā *brāhmaṇas* who had come there previously with them.

The people who gathered there were like an ocean. These people, of a lower status, could not recognize front or back. The assembly of their arms was like a huge wave and their unblinking eyes were like those of fish. They mingled with Kṛṣṇa who shone like the moon. ||12||

[35] The king of Avantī, shedding doubt that Kṛṣṇa was the son of his wife's brother[3], and having affection as the husband of Kṛṣṇa's father's sister, brought them to his house and welcomed them with great respect along with his wife.

[36] When Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma asked permission to return to Mathurā, the *guru* spoke in choked voice:

"My soul has natural affection for you two. Having such affection, my intelligence is embarrassed on having you bring back my son, laying conditions on my affection. I pray that you two members of the Yadu dynasty be my students in all my future lives and that we be your *gurus* and parents." ||13||

[37] The two said, "O master! The real reason we became your students was your incontestable desire." ||14||

[38 - 39] Their faces became filled with tears. The two boys offered him respects and he blessed them, and thus their departure was delayed. They then departed on the road but the king, the citizens, the *guru* and his wife followed them and the two had to stop. For the king to follow was an obstacle. They could not immediately

separate themselves from the effulgent *guru*, his wife, his son and the other students, and the multitude of citizens who followed for a great distance. With difficulty, the two finally came from the center of the town to its edge.

[40] They then spoke sweet words to prevent the people from following further:

“Mathurā is the birthplace of our bodies and Avantī is the birthplace of our qualities. I have made up my mind to see you everywhere just as I see the residents of Mathurā everywhere.” ||15||

[41] They replied with choked voices:

“If the master gives an object strongly desired by beggars, how much can we describe the wisdom of the master, and how much can we glorify the piety of those beggars?” ||16||

[42] Relishing the desire of the citizens with affection, the *guru* and his wife mentally returned home, but followed the two boys for a great distance.

After embracing them and constantly speaking pleasantly in full *prema,* Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma left the *guru*’s son and the students and dismissed the accompanying army sent by the king.

Bringing the chariot to the road, they mounted it with the best of priests who had come there, and arrived close to Mathurā quicker than the wind, while attracting the minds of *devatās* and humans. Stopping the chariot and sending off the priests, they relaxed a while awaiting the orders of their parents.

[43] Hearing from the priests about the remarkable events, the Yadus, putting Vasudeva in the center,

brought the two boys into the city with Vedic and local auspicious rites. Many types of people came to see them. Those having knowledge of various subjects gathered to examine the proficiency of the boys' knowledge and were fully satisfied every day.

[44] Saying this, Snigdhakaṇṭha concluded, "O Nanda! Wherever your son goes he makes the lotus (earth) bloom by his effulgence and spreads heaven everywhere constantly." ||17||

[45] Nanda then said in a choked voice, "If he goes anywhere, fights and gains a kingdom, but returns home because of considering it all useless, his mother and father will be truly happy. If one hears about this, one will also become happy." ||18||

[46] Longing for Kṛṣṇa as if he had just returned, embracing him, kissing his head, Nanda shed tears from his eager eyes. Shedding such tears, all present stared with open eyes.

[47] The bards of Vraja made everyone dance by reciting as follows:

> He went with his elder brother to the village of his *guru*, desiring to study as a *brahmacarī.*
>
> He came quickly to Avantī and attended the classes near his *guru*.
>
> As the soul is attached to the elements, he was attached to all beings.
>
> He had devotion to *guru* more than anyone else and collected more wood than his classmates.
>
> For his service he obtained special mercy from his *guru*. After studies were completed he graduated and finished his vows.

Desiring to attain what his *guru* desired as donation, he went south to bring back his *guru*'s son.

Thinking the son swallowed by the conch was still there, he finally understood that the boy had long been destroyed. But he did not give up.

He took the conch as his Pāñcajanya conch and immediately returned to his elder brother.

He swiftly went to Yama's abode. From Yamarāja's happiness he attained bliss.

When the lord of those to be delivered went there, he destroyed painful punishment of its inhabitants.

He took the son of his *guru*, who was freed from Yamarāja. He was endowed with a body, nature and age as before.

Giving the son to the *guru* and his wife, he pleased them and pleased many others instantly.

Look at Kṛṣṇa who has come to Vraja, who is smiling sweetly in great bliss. ||19||

[48] Hearing this, full of bliss as if regaining a lost treasure, all returned to their houses.

[49] The reciter then spoke separately in the assembly of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa:

O divine Rādhā! Previously, after all the events, your lover, out of *prema,* gave you, his beloved, instructions through his dear friend Uddhava. Considering those instructions, my mind becomes bewildered, agitated, and angry. It reviles, rejoices, and expands with obvious happiness. It becomes full of bliss. ||20||

[50] I will later examine this message. However, giving you the true meaning of these events, your lover never desires to give up your association. ||21||

[51] Satisfying their own minds and satisfying all present, the two reciters returned to their residences. Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa, full of longing after hearing of their previous separation, went to their abode of pastimes.

Chapter Ten

Uddhava Goes to Vraja

[1] The next day Madhukaṇṭha began speaking during the morning recitation, bestowing great happiness to Nanda while Kṛṣṇa personally listened.

[2] After many days Kṛṣṇa came from Avantī to Mathurā and was worshiped with full majesty. He began to think: “Oh! I went far away secretly. For a long time Nanda and others have heard no news but now they will hear that I went far away. They have been seeing my *sphūrti* for allaying their feelings of separation, but it does not give full satisfaction. Directly seeing me will dissipate their lamentation. How can this happen?” He then thought about this with Balarāma in a solitary place.

[3] When he spoke like this, Balarāma said, “You are particularly fearful of breaking the orders of Vasudeva and others in Mathurā. They are not willing to grant this leave nor are they straightforward. We should ask my mother who is born of a great family. She knows the situation in Mathurā and Vraja.”

[4] Discussing together, they then went to Rohiṇī in a solitary place and asked her with tearful eyes, “O mother! Has anyone come from Vraja?”

[5] She said, “Some person came from Vraja. But not seeing you, they left with sorrow.”

[6] They said, “Do they know that we went to Avantī?”

[7] She said, “It is not really known. But among your friends, they speculated on not seeing you for a long time. They wondered if you were here or not.”

[8] The two boys said, “What do you infer from this, since you are most wise? If we secretly go to Vraja and come back, Vasudeva and Devakī will not notice.”

[9] She said, “I have thought of this and they also have thought about this. I do not see a pleasing conclusion. Their attendants are also opposed to this.”

[10] Talking in this manner and seeing the suffering faces of Yaśodā and others in meditation, all three began weeping. Then they decided that they must quickly engage a knowledgeable, astute person to send a message to Vraja.

[11] After meeting and deciding this, Kṛṣṇa, enemy of the demons, began thinking, “I must send to Vraja someone who is most wise and is respected by the people of Mathurā and Vraja, but he should not hide anything from me. The messenger who understands my sweetness and majesty will be able to pacify Vraja. If he only understands my sweetness, he will be burdened by the anguish of their intense grief. If he only understands my majesty, he will consider their absorption in my sweetness to be improper behavior. If he has mere knowledge of sweetness and majesty it will be of little use. There will be no fault-finding or censure if he realizes that I am in all cases dependent on *prema.”*

[12] Thinking who would be the best person for this task in Mathurā, he suddenly remembered:

Ah! Like forgetting a *cintāmaṇi* jewel worn on the neck when desiring some rare object, I have been dull minded

because Uddhava is the suitable person who will cause me bliss.

Uddhava who realized something of my childhood pastimes while worshiping me during his childhood and who developed sickness by hiding his *prema* for me during his *kaiśora* age is here with me! ||1||

I constantly desire the association of Uddhava—who studied under Brḥaspati the authorized scriptures on conduct starting from *Bhāgavatam* in order to disseminate the rules on how to serve me, who experiences the whirling nature of *prema* for me, and who is most suitable to be my minister. ||2||

Oh! Whenever I hear his name, he appears before my vision like a well-known person. Now I am seeing him. He is different from the Yadus and different from Balarāma. I inquire from him on all topics at all times. ||3||

My soul is present externally as Uddhava. My mind and his mind operate in the same way and not otherwise. ||4||

[13] He must be sent to deliver the message to the people of Vraja who are endowed with all types of *prema* and who take me alone as their goal, and who possess *rati* with no restrictions."

[14] After thinking in this way, though it was difficult to find a solitary place because of the continual movements of friends related to many topics, he found a private place and met Uddhava, who produces joy. He brought him to an attractive house and sat him down while his heart flowed like water. Sitting him down and becoming intimate, he took Uddhava's hand in his.

While both their hands trembled, he took Uddhava's tear-soaked hand in his tear-soaked hand. ||5||

He spoke:

> *na tathā me priyatam ātma-yonir na śaṅkaraḥ |*
> *na ca saṅkarṣaṇo na śrīr naivātmā ca yathā bhavān ||*
>
> My dear Uddhava, neither Lord Brahmā, Lord Śiva, Lord Saṅkarṣaṇa, the goddess of fortune nor indeed my own self are as dear to me as you are. SB 11.14.15

You are clearly outstanding among the Yadus and among the people of Vraja. Because I have left Vraja, I know you to be my well-wisher. ||6||

Whenever with a hard heart I hear news of Vraja, you manifest with a melted heart and a melted body. ||7||

[15] Seeing you privately at this time, I will describe my sorrow, impossible to uproot, which is like a lance in my heart.

You know that my heart is bound by *bhakti,* even if it takes the form of enmity. Pūtanā is the evidence of this in the world. Disguising herself as a devoted mother, she acted like a mother. How would my mind not be attracted to Vraja permeated with the *prema* of my mother? ||8||

What to speak of caring for us like her very life, she tied me up to teach me not to waste wealth. Remembering this, my heart bursts open because no one else can do this to me, either to a small or great degree. ||9||

"This child should not be so fickle-minded with an independent streak from his younger years." Though she tied me up once, I am tied up eternally by that act. Ah! Apart from that, my father freed me from that bondage

with tears in his eyes. I am eternally bound by that as well. ||10||

Seeing me, they felt happiness, and hearing me they felt happiness. What else can be said? When I ate, they were satisfied. I do not know how my parents survive without me, since I am their very life. The hope I gave them that I would return has become meaningless. ||11||

Aside from my mother and father, I am the only shelter of my friends, relatives, servants, cows and forest animals. This may not be appreciated by everyone, but even Brahmā has told me that their houses, wealth, friends, dear ones, souls, sons, life airs and intentions are only dedicated to me. ||12||

I think that my father and others born in Gokula, who are the abodes of *prema,* are the original forms and the people of Mathurā are their reflections. My experience is the proof of this. When I experience the people of Vraja I do not think of the Mathurā residents, but when I experience the people of Mathurā I remember the residents of Vraja. ||13||

Though this is so, for practical considerations I cannot go now. You must go as my representative. Going there and considering what I have taught you privately, you should give happiness to everyone there and return to give happiness to me. ||14||

Though all the people of Vraja desire me at all times, there is a particular point–they have some difference in feelings. Some of them with great longing for me think I am only a *sphūrti* when I am personally present and others think that I am personally present on seeing my *sphūrti.* ||15||

Do not reveal my conversation to those who have faith in my words–who take my *sphūrti* as my personal appearance and who are happy in their heart. You should reveal my feelings to my sincere parents among those filled with intense longing. You should pacify some who are filled with crooked *prema* by delivering my words. ||16||

Among the hundreds of people, some who are of that mentality and knowledge should be consoled with your fully satisfying words. A donor nourishes householder *brāhmaṇas* and he attains nourishment by doing so. ||17||

Previously I sent many messengers, but they did not speak the real message. They spoke from their intelligence alone. How can I order you? You are the disciple of Bṛhaspati. Examining things carefully, I am sending you there as my representative. ||18||

[16] Hearing this private conversation perfectly, Uddhava, increasing in natural attraction and overjoyed by attainment of qualification, spoke in a choked voice:

“Though musical instruments are sometimes seen without musical notes and *rāgas*, in association with you who are the best of singers, the instruments, taking support of *rāga*, will satisfy the great souls.” ||19||

[17] Touching Uddhava’s folded hands, giving him visible mercy and giving him joy, Kṛṣṇa took him to Balarāma and explained that Uddhava would go to Vraja. Taking Uddhava and Balarāma to Rohiṇī, he obtained her consent. Showing mercy by making him beautiful with ornaments and cloth, he sent Uddhava to Vraja.

[18] When everyone gathered, they said to Uddhava, “Everyone understands that you are going for all the people of Vraja.”

[19] Kṛṣṇa then said, “To serve *guru* we two brothers went far away. If that rumor should reach Vraja, say that the two boys are not really far away. Keeping in mind your goal while hiding the truth, console my mother and father.”

[20] Looking at Kṛṣṇa with longing, with all his senses stunned, Uddhava departed.

The majesty of Kṛṣṇa related to Mathurā and the abundant sweetness of *prema* related to Vraja attracted Uddhava but the latter was definitely victorious. ||20||

People used to say previously that the inhabitants of Vraja had intense *rati* for Kṛṣṇa but now he heard it directly from Kṛṣṇa’s mouth. Uddhava’s hairs stood on end in anticipation of seeing that *rati,* being pulled by strong torrent of diffusing *rasa.* ||21||

Did a chariot take him to Vraja or the chariot of the mind (desire)? In the contest, desire defeated the chariot. ||22||

Uddhava went from Kṛṣṇa to Vraja. However it is said that every tree on the way gave Uddhava direct vision of Kṛṣṇa. ||23||

“There, Kṛṣṇa ate fruit. Over there, he sat.” Seeing this Vṛndāvana, Uddhava was most joyful. ||24||

All the trees were sprinkled constantly with the fragrance of Kṛṣṇa’s touch and the sight of his form. The trees, marked with clear impressions of his presence, yielded their fruits and flowers as previously. What more can be said? The birds, experiencing a *sphūrti* of Kṛṣṇa,

revealed to Uddhava a manifestation of Kṛṣṇa's present pastimes. ||25||

When Uddhava reached the edge of Vraja, Kṛṣṇa revealed a *sphūrti* to the cows and made Uddhava understand the cows' great bliss on that occasion. ||26||

[21] Śukadeva describes this in verses like the following:

Gokula resounded on all sides with the sounds of bulls in rut, fighting with one another for fertile cows, and with the mooing of cows, burdened by their udders. SB 10.46.9

[22] Having entered, he then came to the center of Vraja and saw clearly how it gave bliss.

[23] The tumultuous shouts of the cowherds were like the roar of the ocean and the cowherds themselves were like an ocean.

The whiteness of the cows in Vraja spread out like the moon and Vraja itself shone like the moon.

As the sky appears bright by the spreading of the sun's rays, Vraja was bright like the sky with the rays of the sun.

As the moon, sun, guests, the cow and *brāhmaṇas* are worshiped in every house by the rules of *karma-kāṇḍa,* taking support of Kṛṣṇa, so in all the houses of Vraja all things were worshiped for the sake of Kṛṣṇa.

As Lava and Kuśa attracted everyone's heart by their songs filled with *karuṇā* and other *rasas* in the Rāmāyaṇa, in Vraja the auspicious cowherd men skillfully attracted everyone with songs filled with *karuṇā-rasa* about Kṛṣṇa.

As *Bhāgavatam* describes the song of the *gopīs*, the *gopīs'* singing spread throughout Vraja.

As Kṛṣṇa plays beautiful notes on the flute, Vraja was filled with the pleasing notes of the flute.

Like *brāhmaṇas* chanting the Vedas at Kṛṣṇa's birth, the sound of milking the cows in Vraja produced happiness.

Uddhava thought of Vraja in this manner.

His chariot covered in cow dust, he entered Vraja unnoticed by others. The sun, wanting to set an example himself, at that time set behind the western mountain. ||27||

[24] Going along the road, Uddhava arrived at the door of Nanda's house and, bringing the chariot there, got off. He sat on the dais in front of Nanda's house with his servant, the chariot driver.

[25] Some of the people busily coming and going noticed him and wondered:

"If he is Kṛṣṇa why do we not feel the happiness we feel on seeing Kṛṣṇa? He seems to have an indifferent attitude, though his form is similar. But it is not Kṛṣṇa's form. He shines in his fine clothing. We will tell Nanda and Yaśodā about this." ||28||

[26] Hearing their words, Nanda understood that he was Uddhava. Going outside, Nanda met him. When Uddhava offered his respects at Nanda's feet, Nanda raised him up. Embracing him, with tears in his eyes he sat him down and taking him by his folded hands, brought him to Yaśodā. He introduced him to her, "This is Uddhava."

[27] Uddhava offered his respects at her feet and then politely stood with folded hands.

[28] The two of them had servants worship Uddhava properly. Though he was younger, they respected him because they knew that this guest was the abode of

Nārāyaṇa. He was the object of Kṛṣṇa's affection and was another form of his body. Because he had assumed the nature of Kṛṣṇa in these two ways Nanda and Yaśodā did not see him as different from Kṛṣṇa.

[29] When Uddhava had relaxed, Nanda's feelings became more intense. He began to question him. But Yaśodā merely listened, soaking the house in tears.

[30] Nanda asked, "My dear most-fortunate one, does the son of Śūra fare well, now that he is free and has rejoined his children and other relatives?" SB 10.46.16

One should taste the great nectar coming from Śukadeva's mouth. I will present this in detail.

Desiring to know details, in asking about Kṛṣṇa, Nanda, being afraid of Kṛṣṇa's sorrow, previously never asked Kṛṣṇa directly but had asked Kṛṣṇa's many friends surrounding him. ||29||

Being pleased, Nanda, because of the help rendered by Madhukaṇṭha, gave blessing to Madhukaṇṭha before the questions were described, addressing him as a greatly fortunate soul. ||30||

My father Parjanya, understanding Vasudeva to be the son of his brother, protected him along with me as a child. Vasudeva is not different from me. He is my close friend. ||31||

Is my friend Vasudeva along with his sons now doing well in Mathurā? His well being makes me happy. ||32||

Among all friends, I ask about the welfare of Vasudeva for his happiness. I ask about his livelihood or its absence from friends and others, since there are now many enemies. ||33||

I have heard that very young Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma went to the *gurukula.* Going there, they appeared splendid in front of the assembly. ||34||

That boy, the color of a rain cloud, who entered my heart, stayed there a long time. Then he took birth. Does he remember his father now? ||35||

O Vṛṣṇi warrior! Does Kṛṣṇa who was born in the eighth month and who is not standing before you remember Yaśodā, who feared danger for him? ||36||

Does he have individual friendship in his heart for his mother, father, relatives and others? ||37||

Does he maintain love in his heart for those friends now deprived of his company, from whom he could not be separated because of his boyish nature? ||38||

Does he remember as previously those boys whom he would substitute for himself in herding the cows and who would come a long distance to eat with him? ||39||

Does he graphically remember the objects of Vraja which were all fully dedicated to him and to which he was fully dedicated? ||40||

We know that he took each cow to be greater than his very self. Does he remember those cows that he fed with food from his own hands? ||41||

Does he sometimes, somewhere, remember Vṛndāvana, which, on seeing, made him forget to eat? ||42||

Ah! Does he remember Govardhana which he used as an umbrella and became imprinted with his foot prints which are useless in his absence? ||43||

Ah! What to speak of never giving up all these people, will he again meet them? If he came only once to see

them, I would be able to see his face with its sweet eyes. ||44||

If he protected us from the whirlwind, from the forest fire, from the harsh rain meant to destroy us, why does this best of sons not protect us now, knowing that we are burning in the forest fire of separation? ||45||

His laugh, his speech, his playful glance, and his gestures, which were all sources of happiness previously, make us into immobile objects with limp bodies, since they now playfully pierce all our vital organs. ||46||

If, on seeing the sorrow of household life, we give up our houses, we will fall into great calamity for everything–– the forests, mountains, rivers and neighboring areas––all marked with his feet, make us remember him. ||47||

Ah! I have great attraction to my son. Do not think that I have material attachment.

These two boys are not ordinary. Garga has said that the *devatās* worship them in meditation. ||48||

[31] Both you and we understand Kṛṣṇa's great power.

Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma killed Kaṃsa, strong as ten-thousand elephants, killed the best of elephant and killed the hordes of wrestlers as mere play in front of you. They broke Śiva's bow as if it were a flower stem. Then again, they killed many demons and lifted a mountain. What else should I say? ||49||

[32] Having said this he spoke again, "Even though Kṛṣṇa shows prowess to indicate he is the Lord, I take him as a tender child and have pure affection for him. What can I do?" With tears in his eyes and throat, Nanda was unable to speak any longer as his breathing became choked. ||50||

When Nanda described Kṛṣṇa's qualities to Uddhava, Yaśodā became emotional. She perspired, milk flowed from her breasts and tears flowed from her eyes. Uddhava on seeing her thought, "She will become a river." ||51||

[33] Understanding this, Uddhava began to think, "Ah! It is my great fortune to witness these two devotees inundated in such deep affection for Kṛṣṇa. But this must be considered: it is most difficult for them to spend their time without him. It is impossible for my master to come here and it is impossible for them to go there. Though it is impossible to destroy or weaken that natural affection, if it can be interrupted somewhat, it is possible for the two of them to survive, but not otherwise. This restriction on their affection can happen if they gain knowledge that he is the Supreme Lord or knowledge of his greatness caused by glorifying his *prema*. Now is a good opportunity to inform them since Nanda has just mentioned that it is possible that Kṛṣṇa is the Lord."

[34] Uddhava then spoke aloud:

Kṛṣṇa is also called Nārāyaṇa. He is *svayam bhagavān.* In him resides pure *prema*, which is superior to the other goals of life. And concerning *prema, vātsalya* reigns supreme. Because you two are the most perfect examples in the three worlds of that *vātsalya prema,* if any fortunate people attain your association they attain the deepest *rati* for Kṛṣṇa. ||52||

Know that matter, the *jīva* and Brahman—these three are portions of portions of the Supreme Lords, Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma. ||53||

[35] Absorbed in Kṛṣṇa's sweetness, Nanda and Yaśodā did not listen to his words. In order to appease their

grief, he then informed them of Kṛṣṇa's coming there in the future. He then spoke with the intention of making them aware of Kṛṣṇa's majesty mixed with sweetness that he would keep as the main topic.

O Nanda! Since the master of all the devotees, the Supreme Lord, has become your son because of your pure *vātsalya-bhāva* he will quickly come to you. Coming here, he will fulfill your desire completely, at all times. Your caring for him as your son will be famous in the Purāṇas and Vedas. ||54||

Having killed Kaṃsa, the enemy of all us Yadus, in the arena, Kṛṣṇa said he would come to you. When I inquired from him, he said this was true in a loud voice. ||55||

[36] Because Nanda and Yaśodā were still grief-stricken he spoke with intense agony:

You two are most fortunate. Do not grieve. You will soon see that Kṛṣṇa resides here at all times. What to speak of being close, he is everywhere. The word *kṛsṇa-vartma* means fire, because fire pervades like Kṛṣṇa. ||56||

He has given the reason why you cannot see his form here now. He must fool the demons into thinking he is not here. ||57||

[37] Thinking that the two would be further aggrieved in thinking of Kṛṣṇa being everywhere like an ordinary object, Uddhava tried to pacify them by speaking in another way:

No one is dear to him and no one is his enemy. He does not see anything as his possession or belonging to anyone else. Thus no one can be the father or mother of the Lord. Though this is so, he accepts these sentiments from his devotees in order to mitigate the pain arising

from their *prema.* Thus how can he give you up when you are suffering like this? ||58||

[38] Kṛṣṇa is not inclined to act in this way for anyone except his devotees. All others are in illusion about this. Saying this, he then expanded on his previous words:

The Lord does not destroy the *jīva's guṇas* though the *guṇas* are in proximity to him. The *jīvas* opposed to him end up in illusion about the Lord by the influence of *māyā.* ||59||

[39] Because the Lord favors his devotees and not the demons, he has become your son because he is controlled by your *prema.* In absence of this *prema,* other people cannot be happy with just ordinary material love. ||60||

As Uddhava and Nanda conversed, dawn appeared. But Uddhava had given up his agile intelligence because of the impetuous *prema* of Nanda. ||61||

[40] At that time, some *gopīs,* attractively dressed because of the happiness from Kṛṣṇa's constant *sphūrti,* got up quickly, lit the lamps and, cleaning the ground with cow dung, began churning yogurt. ||62||

The *gopīs'* song about Kṛṣṇa mixed with the sound of churning spread all around the earth and reached the heavens. Hearing the song, Uddhava considered it would be most auspicious if Kṛṣṇa were near. ||63||

[41] Seeing that *brāhma-muhūrta* had arrived, *bhakti* personified, the king of devotees named Uddhava, gave up his seat with a desire to perform morning worship of the Lord. Taking permission from Nanda and Yaśodā, he went to the water. He then informed them as follows:

I desired to console you. Your affection is far beyond me. But that affection will accomplish all that you desire. In consoling you, my audacity has caused you great disturbance. ||64||

You, the protectors of Vraja, should not worry any longer, for your young boy is the boat for crossing the ocean of material existence for the whole world. ||65||

Informing them, he went to the river, but seeing his chariot on the road, people wondered about the owner.

[42] Seeing Uddhava's chariot, the women feared Akrūra had come. Those whose tongues are burned by caustic lime will think that yogurt is also lime. ||66||

[43] In bliss Madhukaṇṭha spoke a concluding verse:

"O Nanda! Previous events have been described in a remarkable manner. Your son is sitting in your lap. Ah! Seeing your moon like face withered, he moistens his cheeks with tears continually." ||67||

[44] When the speakers satisfied everyone, the people satisfied the two reciters. The reciters returned to their lodging and all others went their way.

Kṛṣṇa himself praised Uddhava saying, "No one is dearer to me." This Uddhava he sent to Vraja as his messenger. ||68||

Chapter Eleven

Mistaking the Bee for a Messenger

[1] As previously, recitation (in the evening) took place in the assembly of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa.

[2] Understanding the extent of the topic, and dividing it up into two sessions, Snigdhakaṇṭha spoke.

[3] Uddhava went to the *tīrtha* where the *gopīs* would gather to pass time and worship their deity. But Uddhava quickly took his morning bath at a place separated by some distance from them. Completing his rites carefully with devotion he left, not too far from them.

[4] While leaving, he saw them. The *gopīs*' hair was untied, their clothing soiled and their effulgence dull, as if glowing coals had been covered by smoke and ash. But their eyes were restless to see Kṛṣṇa. Because of their heavy breathing their lips had cracked and their faces had dried up. They appeared like deer frightened by a forest fire. ||1||

Looking at Uddhava for a long time, the *gopīs* were astonished. He had the same complexion as Kṛṣṇa. His arms were long, cylindrical and firm. He had lotus eyes in a moon-like face and was at the age of new youth. What more can be said? He was the combination of all types of beauty. *Makara* earrings swung in his ears and his cloth surpassed gold. Seeing him, they mistook him

for Kṛṣṇa. They remained motionless like pictures for a long time. ||2||

Though the *gopīs* noticed that Uddhava resembled Kṛṣṇa, they did not mistake him for Kṛṣṇa out of illusion, since they had spiritual eyes. ||3||

Sometimes the *gopīs* saw Kṛṣṇa in lifeless objects like a tree because of some similarity, but they did not see Kṛṣṇa in other men since their nature was to uphold *dharma*. ||4||

[5] Astonished, they gathered, like bees whose life is the lotus, around Uddhava, who was like life- giving water for the lotus, who was pure internally and externally from living close to Kṛṣṇa.

[6] Surrounding him, they concluded he must be a respected servant of Kṛṣṇa. Humbly respecting him, worshiping him with fine words and a seat, they remained silent for some time. Smiling unnaturally, overcome by their pain, they spoke:

We know you to be an associate of the lord of the Yadus because of your fragrance. We know him also. What can we say, being most miserable? Because he has given you an order, you have given up the wealth of Mathurā and come to the village. We understand clearly who you are. ||5||

If you say you have been sent by your master, do not say clearly, “I have come just to console you.” The cause of your coming is his father and mother. If there are both secondary and primary causes, the primary cause is your main purpose. ||6||

Peaceful one! Even sages cannot give up affection for friends. How then has he given up his father and

mother? Ah! The pot (the effect) cannot give up the earth (material cause) or the potter's wheel (instrumental cause). He uses them as long as they serve his interest. We ask you, knower of proper conduct. ||7||

If he does not give regard to his father and mother, will he look at anything in Vraja? In Mathurā, there are wealth, elephants, horses, chariots, men and *devatās.* Here the best wealth is the rope for binding the cows. ||8||

In this world the relationship between the enjoyer and the enjoyed is not clear. The relationship between the flower and bee is not fixed. The relationship of man and woman for momentary happiness when they come together with mutual dependence is also temporary. ||9||

Enough of the perpetual relationship of man and woman! Marriage is characterized by *dharma* and material happiness as the steady elements. Therefore marriage is desired by common people. Illicit lovers desire the happiness of married life but finally they give each other up. The prostitute gives up a destitute lover and a wealthy old man gives up the prostitute. ||10||

[7] From the beginning the functions of the *gopīs'* minds, words, and bodies knew only Govinda. They were dedicated to him alone and did not know external good or bad. Ah! Ah! In separation they became disturbed by pain. This was observed even by outsiders. Though Uddhava arrived in Vraja to pacify everyone in general, the *gopīs* surpassed all normal limits in their upheaval of pain. What more can be said? They revealed Kṛṣṇa's confidential message carried by Uddhava in their attractive songs. My heart thus burns. What more can be

said of their incomprehensible state of madness in separation?

[8] After silence, with heads bowed, the reciter spoke again, “Ah! In fear of a scorpion I have entered a snake’s mouth nearby. Though I have given up the madness of separation, without an alternative I have been bound up by the state of madness of Rādhā. I have been made to describe her words of lamentation.”

[9] Pained for a moment and then happy, Uddhava spoke, “Oh! Waking up, I can somehow destroy the sorrow produced during my dream because Rādhā, who experiences a direct meeting with her lover (and thus gains joy), is my support.”

I will expand on this. A profound condition of Rādhā’s mind filled with manifestations of Kṛṣṇa appears now and then.

[10] Her condition:

“My lover comes to me and secretly goes to Mathurā. Therefore he enjoys with some women there.” ||11||

[11] That mental condition became much stronger on seeing Uddhava. That state of anger overcame mental propriety. Under the control of impressions arising from seeing the messenger, she thought that a bee was another messenger.

[12] She conjectured:

“Coming from Mathurā the bee is humming and shaking its head. It must be his messenger. He comes for some purpose.” ||12||

[13] She thought, “I will first scold the bee.” She then spoke, “Ah! Ugh! Why do you come from Mathurā and act so brashly in front of me? Go away to the forest!”

[14] Looking at the bee with a cruel glance she said in derision, “Rascal! Ah! This is not unbefitting to you, since you drink liquor. That is why you are called the liquor drinker.[4]”

[15] With a laugh she said, “Ah! You now enjoy drinking because your master, the lord of drunkards, is the master of Mathurā,”

[16] Thinking again she then spoke roughly, “Your relationship as master and servant is not inappropriate because he is the master of drunkards and you are a drunkard. This is well established. You two are famous as the maintainer and the maintained.” ||13||

[17] Finding some other fault, Rādhā frowned and said, “O friends! Hear this! The bee appears to be sincere in heart by giving up its confusion. But it also appears to be a cheater because it hums and shakes its head. This is astonishing, but maybe not so astonishing.” She addressed the bee, “O friend of the cheater! Why do you come here so freely, as if with a pure heart? Go away! I am not a friend of cheaters. You cannot cheat me. Do not put on pretenses. One must infer that the friend of a cheater has double the cheating propensity. Cheating all cheaters, he takes the help of another cheater.” ||14||

[18] Considering this, she laughed softly and then saw that the bee was trying to land on her foot, thinking it was a lotus. She said, “Ah! You are the cheater’s friend! Do not touch even one of my feet.”

[19] Considering again, she spoke when the bee was going away:

Ah! What are you saying? What are you saying?

[20] Are you saying, ‘O mistress! I have come from my master and touching your feet is most desirable.’ Let that be, crooked fellow! That would be allowed if my mind had not been dried up by previously finding fault with you. Let that be, since it is not the topic. Now I see another very obvious bad quality in you. Your whiskers are tinged with *kuṃkuma* of his crushed garland which was colored by the *kuṃkuma* from the breasts of other women who compete for his association.

A certain person carries on his chest the *kuṃkuma* used by women. Another person with whiskers seems to have scorched hairs. ||15||

[21] She said, “Ah! Because his relationships are based on city ways, they end in vulgar conduct!” Laughing she again spoke, “Therefore, proud bee, do not touch me at all. Or if you touch me, do not do so with your whiskers.”

[22 - 24] Moving her chin, which was red with anger, she said, “What are you saying? ‘O mistress! You are filled with the highest *prema.* My master has sent me to appease your anger. Because of hunger, on the way I drank some flower honey difficult to reject. My whiskers got colored by the pollen.’ That is true, for lies, one by one, take on the appearance of a hundred truths. Therefore who will take the word of liars as truth?” ||16||

[25] She said:

Let that be. We have no use in arguing with you, waving our hands or talking with you, O servant of the rascal! We have no use for his pleasing words or for his sending you. Let the lord of the drunkards accept women of Mathurā whose anger is appeased, since both take shelter of the word *madhu* (liquor). You can be his

servant there since you also have that word *madhu* in your name.

All become happy in associating with people of similar quality. It is seen that drunks, wine makers and cheaters make each other happy. ||17||

[26] Laughing loudly, she began scolding the bee with hatred:

His satisfaction with you will be the laughing stock in the Yadu assembly because of his inattention. You have shamelessly accepted to be his messenger and have accepted marks hard to conceal. By nature not a wanderer, you wander around everywhere.

The musk rat may want to hide himself from others but it will be revealed by the constant scent emanating from its body. ||18||

[27 - 28] With anger she revealed another fault:

Ah! Bee! You are speaking again. 'Why do you speculate that my innocent master and I have faults? Ah! We see no possibility of fault.'

Then please hear the faults. The king of cheaters came to us with apparent attraction for us. We thought he would not leave us. Ah! He suddenly gave us up. What can be more condemned than this? I surmise that he has no fear of giving pain to others because he has a body which destroys all others. You then met the rascal, who has a similar nature to you, and studied scriptures from him by which you learned not to give respect to the wise. It is seen that the student has greater knowledge than the master, for desiring your own benefit you drink the flower nectar and then go elsewhere. But he does not have such self-interest. One sees that he takes happiness

simply in giving suffering to others. This serpent of time wrongly gave up obedient woman like us after once letting us enjoy his nectar lips which cause confusion.

Some, like the bee, crush others for their own benefit. Some give pain to others, but not for their own benefit, like the drunkard. ||19||

[29] This is most astonishing! From this, we can see another glorious fact. The deity of all women, Lakṣmī, producing good qualities, serves your lotus feet, for it is heard and experienced that wherever Kṛṣṇa goes, Lakṣmī also goes.

[30] Thinking of this and again thinking Rādhā said, “Lakṣmī is straightforward. She does not know the deception of deceivers. She desires only him. This is most unfortunate. Let the insentient lotus worship the indifferent, cruel sun, but how can wise Lakṣmī worship indifferent, cruel Kṛṣṇa?” ||20||

[31] In this way Rādhā, stating her misfortune, began crying. What more can be said of her state of madness?

[32 - 33] Seeing the bee humming attractively because of its nature, she spoke in another way, “O friends! This bee is showing arrogance. Look, look! It cannot be trusted. It is starting to sing. It is thinking, ‘I will soften her by singing.’ Therefore I will quickly chastise it.”

She spoke aloud, “Four-legged animals are foolish. You have six legs. You must be more foolish. If not, why are you singing in Vraja which is full of misery? You did not hear this. He who understands the hearts of others in the assembly and acts accordingly is quickly designated as a *devatā.* He who does not, though a human, is designated as an animal.” ||21||

[34 - 35] She said, “Even if you sing here, why do you sing so much? He who sings excessively not understanding the feelings of the listeners is like a dog which barks and is beaten thoroughly. Even if you sing, why do you sing about the Yadu king? A person establishes a relationship with an object so that he gets pleasure. Anyway, he who understands the heart of his sender sings loudly even if devoid of consciousness. A stringed instrument is the example. It produces special, attractive *rāgas* though it is unconscious.” ||22 - 23||

[36] In anger she again spoke, “Ah! If you say that he established the relationship long ago in Vraja, then you are a fool because you are singing of a worn-out relationship. The poets praise present relationships of praiseworthy people. The bards never praise previously existing sons of a king.” ||24||

[37] She continued to speak, “If you are singing for making money, then, with thirst for money, go and sing in front of the householders of Mathurā. Even they will do something to prevent the disturbance. O bee! From the sinful day that he left for Mathurā, we have conspicuously given up our houses and have lost all desires. But you sing in front of us, who have no money. Ah! What are you saying? Are you saying you also have no desires? Then why do you sing about Kṛṣṇa who should be condemned? If you say you are singing a traditional song, then sing a Purāṇa. What can I say? With six legs you are beast and a half. So then you don’t have any thirst for money? With no money and no good qualities, you are doubly condemned, for the person who does not know places which yield or withhold money is not intelligent. Such a person has that bad quality which gives him the urge to beg from another person.” ||25||

[38 - 39] Again she spoke, “Therefore listen, fool! Listen to good instruction. You should sing to his friends about the victory of your friend who is victorious in romance. The Yadus will not be embarrassed by this. Cupid will increase in the breasts of these women whose pain has been dissipated by him. Hear the truth enunciated by Vātsyāyana. Giving up shyness, I will speak. Big-breasted women become more blissful to the degree that the lover shows boldness. Hearing about those acts of pleasure is as enjoyable as the pleasure derived from direct experience of amorous acts. This is the conclusion of Vātsyāyana.” ||26 - 27||

[40] Laughing, she said, “In shaking your head are you deliberating on this? Except by begging from someone, what can my friends give you? Listen. I will instruct you. A person who wants something from another person asks that person for it. The asker may worry about the hesitation of the donor, but that increases his eagerness for the object.” ||28 ||

[41 - 42] Thinking for a moment, Rādhā then ignored the bee and spoke to her friends, “Oh! Friends of my life! Understand it is a flower insect. How can it understand the essence of *dharma* that you experience? The bee says, ‘O goddess! Do not use harsh words against me. How will these women dedicated to their husbands serve another man? You should be silent.’”

[43] She said, “You should say this to the bee. ‘Yes they are dedicated to their husbands. But no woman in heaven, on earth or in the lower worlds can control him. Mothers of seven children cannot give him up.’ But do not say this like an enemy. ‘Why do you criticize him, who has the best qualities?’ He desires power to control

everyone. Not having other qualities, he depends on *māyā* alone to make this happen. The cat renunciate controls others but not the genuine renunciate. The only goal of the cat renunciate is to control others. The genuine renunciate does not desire this." ||29||

[44] She continued, "People define good qualities of Kṛṣṇa's body in terms of the illusion created by his smile, brows, and other features. But in his mind there is only the power of illusion. But we say this out of compassion, not hatred. You should instruct all these women about him, for a person pierced by a thorn prevents others from being pierced. A person who is not troubled by others' pain will not do so. Such a person is a thorn." ||30||

[45 - 46] Teaching the bee through her friends, Rādhā then worried that the bee would speak. Therefore she spoke boldly, "O bee! Why do you find fault with us since you are buzzing? Are you, with fine intelligence, attracted to Kṛṣṇa? The bee says, 'Lakṣmī goes without shyness wherever there is his foot dust. How is it possible for us to give up attachment to him?'"

[47] Deliberating she said, "O bee with impure intelligence! You do not understand. He first controls Lakṣmī in this way. He who desires to control everybody, if clever, first controls the main person. Everyone follows that main person (Lakṣmī)." ||31||

[48] She said, "Why should we hide? Though there is no gain, we have become greedy because of the deceit of the stealer of our minds. By that bewilderment, we still have the best intelligence, not deceitful intelligence. But you then ask, 'If you have such intelligence, why do you have faith in him now?'

[49] She continued, “Listen to this. This is true. Since he takes away the suffering of the penniless and fulfils all their desires and is thus called Uttamaśloka, most praised, his name will deliver us from the pain of separation. To create that faith, *māyā* works on our intelligence. Just as Jaimini’s students enjoy the results of sacrifice, if one chants the *devatās’* names without faith one still achieves results.” ||32||

[50] When the bee followed her feet because of thinking they were attractive lotuses emanating the most excellent perfume, she thought the bee was begging forgiveness. Rādhā began shouting and ordering the bee, “Ah! Evil bee! Why are trying to touch my feet with your head, while uttering clever words? Quickly go away. We know the method of causing dissension taught by your *guru*. It is full of skillful humility and deceit. Are you a renounced person, without such skill? If a cheater once cheats a person who has no deceit, that person will think everything is false, like seeing a drama. But still, how can we reestablish a relationship with a person who accepted us, making us give up everything because of his deception, and then rejected us?” ||33 - 34||

[51] Giving up that mood, she then spoke again with transformations arising from deep affection, unappreciated by the ignorant, “Ah! We should not care for a person who does not have ability to understand. Look, look! His evil heart is completely black. What to speak of the injury that bees and cuckoos inflict on creepers meant for offering! Rāma was considered the highest example of *dharma* but it is said that he performed cruel acts on the innocent king of the monkeys and the daughter of Viśrava who worshiped

him. Ah! What? You say, ‘Hatred of a brother because of a woman caused this. Sūrpaṇakhā was a loose woman. Thus killing them is justified.’ Shame on you! Rāma was controlled by a woman and killed a deer for her. That is well known. How have we, not bound up, become bound up by words? Do not be proud. We will now illustrate this statement with examples. A person who talks to hide his faults reveals all his faults by his excessive words.” ||35||

[52] She continued, “Though I do not criticize others, out of pain I criticize the killer of the golden deer. Though you have no relationship with Rāma you argue on his behalf. This means that your Kṛṣṇa is also controlled by women. That is how your defense ends. That is clear. Do not be deceitful. This means he has been conquered by the women of Mathurā after rejecting us. You have full faith in him. You are the witness to that. There is no need to argue. Please investigate the subject of our talk. Rāma was born in a *kṣatriya* family and thus cruelty is not inappropriate. But look! Vāmana, who was born from Kaśyapa, who was a *brāhmaṇa* and a strict *brahmacarī* from birth—what did he do to Bali? Destroying Bali illustrates that Kṛṣṇa is like a crow, spoiling the sacrificial offering (*balibhuk)*. In fulfilling his desires, he causes many new problems. You are neutral to all. Thus talking with you causes us grief. What are you saying unclearly? ‘Why do the sages describe Kṛṣṇa with excellent words?’ In describing his character in this way, the sages show their own faults. Though they have faults, Kṛṣṇa’s powerful, bewildering energy makes the sages attracted to Kṛṣṇa and instills fear in them. One does not become as fearful of a violent animal as one becomes fearful on seeing a person who pretends to support *dharma*. What can a tiger do, from whom one

flees in fear? One should instead fear the person who has a violent heart but thinks he has fine character." ||36 - 37||

[53] Rādhā paused, reflected and spoke, "Oh! Those who praise his character are influenced by *māyā*. Let that be. But by the influence of its *māyā* such glorification quickly uproots the essence of *dharma*, the wealth of married life. It makes them embrace forbidden conduct and reject household life with family members possessing *kadamba* trees. It makes them poverty stricken and finally they end up begging like birds."

[54] She said, "Do not start arguing with this. How did the great souls listen to such talks? Giving up envy, listen. First, as if faultless, the talks smear the ear, like a tongue, with their nectar. Later they agitate the intelligence like a drink made of poisonous *dhustūra* powder mixed with sugar. I think they are not birds but human householders. Bewildered by his songs, beaten by relatives, they have become beggars." ||38||

[55] Pricking up her ears, she again spoke, "Oh! You speak like this. O bee, thirsty for Kṛṣṇa! What you imagine is not true. But you worship him internally and externally. Listen to this. For us truth is not just imagination. It is based on perception in the present and what has actually occurred in the past. First we took his words to be most remarkable, just as you do. But later we realized those words were like the attractive song of the hunter catching a deer. What do we do when we are now faced with insurmountable grief and shame? Listen. Attracted to him, joyful when he wore his forest dress, we were eager to meet him. But realizing the touch of his sharp nails (also called hand-thorns) to be arrows we

experienced only pain. O bee! I swear that contact with his limbs does not appear in my mind. I infer from the inner pain that the touch of his nails is actually poisonous.” ||39||

[56] She said, “When he practices deceit and his minister Uddhava becomes silent, by showing yourself, you appear to be Uddhava’s subordinate representative. By your buffoon methods, you are a learned buffoon! Show mercy to me and talk about someone else. Whatever knowledge you teach, learned from him, is not new. Any knowledge other than knowledge of him does not give us fear.” ||40||

[57 - 58] Having said this, Snigdhakaṇṭha continued:

Intoxicated with the state of *divyonmāda* due to intense feelings of separation, Kṛṣṇa’s *sphūrti* appeared. She then showed crooked anger. When the bee according to its nature wandered into another tree, she showed the mood of a lover separated after quarrel (*kalahāntarita*). She then spoke:

“Oh! I have been harsh, having used abusive language to Kṛṣṇa’s messenger. Because the bee does not understand what I said, it has left. He sent the bee because he has no other lovers and wants to protect us, but I have criticized the bee. I have thrown fire on the lotus of my heart.” ||41 - 42||

[59] Then Rādhā cried. Seeing that, all her *sakhīs* cried. But then looking at the path that the bee took, she saw the bee or another bee like it suddenly coming near. She began to speak with distorted speech mixed with excessive shivering caused by confusion. She wanted to say, “O dear friends the bee has returned” (SB 10.47.20)

but instead she stuttered "*Pi pi pi pi priya-sakha pu pu pu pu punar āgāḥ.*"

[60] "Though you went there, you have returned. Therefore you are our dear friend."

[61] The meaning is this:

A person who plays with you is a friend and one who experiences your suffering and happiness is called dear. And one who lives with you during the suffering is called a dear friend. ||43||

[62] With special *anurāga* in her heart, she thought of her good fortune. She asked mentally, "Has my beloved sent him?" When she came to utter the word "beloved," she fainted on uttering the first syllable. Uddhava lost his self-control and the *sakhīs* lost their power of intelligence. In that state of fainting with increasing bewilderment, she spoke as if in a dream, while thinking, "Oh! Oh! How can I repay the bee? Please choose. What do you want?" However, out of her confused state, she used the first person ending instead of the second person ending (*anurundhe* instead of *anuruntse*).

[63] The meaning is this:

Having dear friendship is a person's real wealth. It belongs to no one else. But that wealth is not suitable to give to Kṛṣṇa's messenger, the bee. I will ask the bee what it wants. ||44||

[64] Attached to the bee, she then worried, "The bee thinks 'This woman is a fool, not a relisher of *rasa.* Therefore she thinks that I, eternally Kṛṣṇa's unconditional friend, to be partial to him.' Therefore I will say 'I should honor you, friend.'" (SB 10.47.20)

[65] This is the meaning:

Though a person is not an unconditional friend to another person, he should always try to satisfy that person, for he never considers that person different from himself. ||45||

[66] She then had a *sphūrti* of the bee who said, “If you think that friends are non-different, then give me this as a gift: without worry, carefully get on the chariot.”

[67] Then she spoke in misery, “But why have you come back here to take us to him, whose conjugal love is so difficult to give up?” (SB 10.47.20)

[68] This is the meaning:

O bee! By your nature you give happiness to all people. Since you are my friend, why do you take me to his co-wives? You and Kṛṣṇa do not know my sorrow. Therefore do not try to take me, suffering in separation. ||46 - 47||

[69] She again thought, “Perhaps he is saying, ‘Now he has started studying the Vedas. How can he associate with women?’”

[70] “To this I say this, ‘After all, gentle bee, his consort is the goddess Śrī, and she is always with him, staying upon his chest.’” (SB 10.47.20)

[71] This is the meaning:

The golden line on the left side of his chest is known as Lakṣmī. In the bloom of youth, she meets him in a solitary place. The nature of unchaste women is to go here and there independently. Take me to Mathurā—but not to stay with those women. ||48 - 49||

[72] As external objects manifest according to desire, when she opened her eyes and looked around she saw the bee which had left for some time. Not seeing it, she then experienced constant separation.

[73] She thought, “Previously I did not ask what I should have asked the bee.” In anger she said, “It is indeed regrettable that Kṛṣṇa now resides in Mathurā.” (SB 10.47.21)

[74] The meaning is this:

King of the bees! I speak the truth. You are my benefactor, the friend among all friends. I hide no secrets from you. If one considers what is right, he should be my husband. Natural attraction for each other is the standard. O what misfortune! My lover has gone to Mathurā and has not returned for a long time, being controlled by the women there and covered over. Thinking he may not even be there, my heart in doubt has burned to ashes. ||50 - 51||

[75] Understanding from the bee that Kṛṣṇa was happily living in Mathurā, she again asked specifically, “Does he remember his father’s household affairs and his friends, the cowherd boys?” (SB 10.47.21)

[76] The meaning is this:

If in his mind he comes daily to Vraja, if he remembers his father, mother, his many friends and even us, his *sphūrti* should directly appear to his parents and friends at all times. Sprinkled with that pure nectar, we will die. ||52||

[77] Since the bee seemed to agree, she gave up reservation and asked, “Does he ever talk about us, his maidservants?” (SB 10.47.21)

[78] The meaning is this:

In a private place, seeing his form dressed nicely in clothing made by us, sometimes the bee says to him, “Do

you not remember those servants, the *gopīs*? Though you are far away, you should meet with them." ||53||

[79] She then began to lament, "When will he lay on our heads his *aguru*-scented hand?" (SB 10.47.21) Then she experienced his trunk-like arms to be pillars of pride. Possessed by the fire of separation, she fainted as she uttered the word "arm." She meant the future tense (*dhāsyati*) but spoke in the past tense (*adhāsyāt)* out of confusion.

[80] Her fainting:

When one could not concluded that it was Rādhā because of change of voice, thinness, disfigured limbs and discoloration, one had doubt whether she was present in a body or not, since saliva fell over her body, her actions stopped completely, and her breathing could not be detected. ||54||

[81] The meaning is this:

Desiring to engage his hand, more fragrant than the best *aguru* scent, in serving me, when will he touch it to my head, making my heart blossom in joy? ||55||

[82] After describing this, Snigdhakaṇṭha spoke about his own sadness to Kṛṣṇa while Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa listened.

O Kṛṣṇa! Beautiful Rādhā has faded in separation from you. Her soft heart has become cruel. She has given up her shyness. The sweet smile has faded from her face. When most dear Rādhā falls into this condition of separation from you, my heart on thinking of this develops extreme pain. ||56||

O Kṛṣṇa most attractive among all things! There is the pain of separation by which one becomes completely

void. There are certainly dissension and the obstacles caused by quarrel with you. My mind, thinking of the miserable condition of Rādhā's mind in the *prakaṭa* pastimes, becomes bewildered. ||57||

[83] When the assembly became filled with the highest joy in the presence of glowing Rādhā, tightly embraced by Kṛṣṇa, who had intense desire, for a moment there was a break in the study of the pastimes, like the first lunar day (when study does not take place), since the hearts of Snigdhakaṇṭha and Madhukaṇṭha, filled with inner bliss, had been longing to go to their residences for a long time.

Chapter Twelve

Bliss Revealed by Uddhava

[1] Then Madhukaṇṭha spoke.

[2] Rādhā remained unconscious for one *muhūrta* (48 minutes) and all the *sakhīs* cared for her. They lamented, “O friend Rādhā, with such love for Kṛṣṇa! O Rādhā, who always gives us happiness! We see you are in a deathly state with dark eyes!” Kṛṣṇa’s best servant Uddhava, a facsimile of Kṛṣṇa, appearing like his *sphūrti*, also lamented, and brought her to consciousness by bringing close to her a fresh piece of Kṛṣṇa’s cloth holding his bodily fragrance. He placed her in the center, with great determination, and convinced her that she would meet Kṛṣṇa. With *the sakhīs* sitting all around, he consoled them for a long time. As previously, first he spoke sweet words glorifying Kṛṣṇa’s and their greatness in order to relieve them of emotions difficult for anyone to bear.

“You who have offered your hearts completely to Kṛṣṇa from whom *artha, dharma, kāma* and *mokṣa* can be obtained are most successful. He is not far from you. *Prema* in the guise of separation is showing your exceeding greatness.” ||1||

[3] Having praised them, Uddhava then spoke with lamentation:

The intelligent person will first hear news from the messenger and then rejoice or lament.

The fool without hearing from the messenger imagines the situation and rejoices or suffers. ||2||

[4] When your dear Kṛṣṇa wanted to send me to Vraja he spoke to me privately:

gacchoddhava vrajaṃ saumya pitror nau prītim āvaha |
gopīnāṃ mad-viyogādhiṃ mat-sandeśair vimocaya ||
tā man-manaskā mat-prāṇā mad-arthe tyakta-daihikāḥ |
mām eva dayitaṃ preṣṭham ātmānaṃ manasā gatāḥ ||
ye tyakta-loka-dharmāś ca mad-arthe tān bibharmy aham |
mayi tāḥ preyasāṃ preṣṭhe dūra-sthe gokula-striyaḥ ||
smarantyo ’ṅga vimuhyanti virahautkaṇṭhya-vihvalāḥ |
dhārayanty ati-kṛcchreṇa prāyaḥ prāṇān kathañcana |
pratyāgamana-sandeśair ballavyo me mad-ātmikāḥ ||

“O Uddhava who makes me blissful, please listen! Dear gentle Uddhava, go to Vraja and give pleasure to our parents. And also relieve the *gopīs,* suffering in separation from me, by giving them my message. The minds of those *gopīs* are always absorbed in me, and their very lives are ever devoted to me. For my sake they have abandoned everything related to their bodies, renouncing ordinary happiness in this life, as well as religious duties necessary for such happiness in the next life. I alone am their dear most beloved and indeed, their very self. Therefore I take it upon myself to sustain them in all circumstances. My dear Uddhava, for those women of Gokula I am the most cherished object of love. Thus, when they remember me, who am so far away, they are overwhelmed by the anxiety of separation. Simply because I have promised to return to them, my fully devoted cowherd girlfriends

struggle to maintain their lives somehow or other. SB 10.46.3-6

[5] The words, “Dear gentle Uddhava, go to Vraja”, are meant for both his parents and you *gopīs*. One fourth of the first verse is dedicated to his parents. All four verses are dedicated to your *anurāga.*

[6] Uddhava made them understand these verses. He then explained something of the verses in the manner he explained to Nanda and Yaśodā, according to Kṛṣṇa’s words, such as the verse *Uttara Campū* 2.10.8 starting with *jānāsi tvam*:

You know that my heart is bound by *bhakti,* even in the form of enmity. Pūtanā is the evidence of this in the world. Disguising herself as a devoted mother, she acted like a mother. How could my mind not be attracted to Vraja permeated with *prema* of my mother?

After that, with afflicted heart he explained in detail the meaning of the verses.

There are some women in Vraja whose mind even I cannot understand. Their feelings of separation will not be destroyed by your words. If you reveal my talks with you, they will be able to understand those talks with difficulty (and will be freed of grief). ||3||

Though the *gopīs* have given up eating because of me, they remain alive for a long time. This is not a lie but true. Their life airs are dedicated to me, who possess an immortal body. Their minds are constantly thinking of me. This is the reason they remain alive. ||4||

The *gopīs* pass their time thinking of me as their dear lover, the abode of incomparable *prema* and as the Paramātmā. Previous to this, the *gopīs* gave up the

cowherd men who externally appeared to be their husbands and who excelled in *dharma* and local customs, thinking them to be insignificant. ||5||

When the *gopīs* gave up *dharma* and local people because of attraction for me, they attained a lamentable condition. Previously, in their hearts they secretly gave up *dharma* and local customs, but now they have given up *dharma* and local people and are in a lamentable condition. ||6||

I cannot reject others who, just on hearing about me, give up their relatives and their individual duties though their worship may be faulty. How then can I give up the *gopīs* whose bodies are ever fresh with *prema*? ||7||

Though the *gopīs* see me constantly within their hearts as a *sphūrti* and by that are able to maintain and nourish their lives, if somehow or other talk of my being in Mathurā arises, then they become bewildered by remembering how distant I am. ||8||

Because the *gopīs* take a moment of separation from me to be a *kalpa,* they almost died at the beginning of the *rāsa* dance because of separation. I have repeatedly and emphatically stated that I will return so that their life airs do not leave their bodies. ||9||

As I swore to my mother and father previously, I instruct you, in order that you understand. I know that I am a cowherd. I have revealed my cowherd nature by saying, “My cowherd girls.” Therefore there is no difference between me and them. ||10||

[7 - 8] Hearing this, I then inquired, “Then why do you not go there eventually in a pleasant form?” Hearing this, Kṛṣṇa, with discolored face, revealed to me the truth, “Though it is possible to kill all the enemies, there

is some shyness here and there which stops my attempts to go to Vraja. Not only have the *gopīs* offered themselves completely to me (but I have also given myself to them.) A person may say, “This is my *brāhmaṇa* wife.” (The word *brāhmaṇī* indicates a *brāhmaṇa’s* wife as well as any *brāhmaṇa* woman.) I, as the son of a cowherd say, “These are my cowherd girls, non-different from me.” (SB 10.46.6) (Similarly the word *vallabhyaḥ* will mean cowherd wives.) From this it is understood that they are my eternal consorts or wives. But by some remarkable *māyā,* they think that they are someone else’s wife. Māyā’s action has pervaded everything. Previously being absorbed in the *prema* of Vraja, producing this human-like pastime, Māyā’s actions allowed me to leave with difficulty.”

[9] He continued speaking, “As their *anurāga* developed, they became attracted to me and I became attracted to them. To increase that *anurāga* I previously performed visible actions such as showing my form and invisible actions such as playing my flute in remarkable ways in order to absorb them in the human-like pastimes and then sent messengers and met them. Therefore why would I hide from the *gopīs* who are dear to me? Intelligent Kārtikeya, because of his great knowÿedge, has revealed my attraction for you in praising *tulasī* in *Skanda Purāṇa:*

gavāṃ hitāya tulasī gopīnāṃ rati-hetave |
vṛndāvane tvaṃ vapitā sevitā viṣṇunā svayam |
gokulasya ca vṛddhy-arthaṃ kaṃsasya nidhanāya ca ||

O Tulasī! For the benefit of the cows, for the *anurāga* of the *gopīs,* for the prosperity of Gokula, and in order

to kill Kaṃsa, Viṣṇu planted and served you in Vṛndāvana.”

[10 - 11] Again he spoke: “The private affairs between the *gopīs* and their apparent husbands became like horns on a rabbit, devoid of reality by the influence of *māyā’s* energy. Attachment to sons and in-laws’ sons gradually slackened. And then again, their attraction for me became noticed by others because it gradually increased unlimitedly. Because of shame caused by that, I left their attachment on the strength of another pretext––going to kill Kaṃsa. When I return to Vraja and they accept me again, there will again be shame. And if I do not accept them they will die. But still I will go there and somehow resolve this problem. Losing self-control because of longing, I described with a choked voice the suffering condition of my friends in Vraja to Vasudeva and Devakī and asked permission to go to Vraja but they did not give permission. If I ignored their order and went anyway, it would not at all be auspicious. Thinking in this way I became dejected. Moreover I wanted permission to bring all the fathers and mothers to Mathurā. That permission also was not granted and thus I did not call them for my sacred thread ceremony. Until I have solved the problem by the influence of time, using my intelligence, I desire in the meantime to send you, Uddhava, who are non-different from me, because of their suffering condition. Even if you can find a solution to all problems, you should give them this message I have written and read it personally since they will be blinded by their tears and will not be able to read it.”

[12] The first statement is as follows:

You are never actually separated from me, for I am the soul of all creation. (SB 10.47.29)

[13] Hearing just this much, the *gopīs* began to think, “He is teaching us *brahma-jñāna* since he is identifying everything with himself. We don’t want to hear that.”

[14] Then they asked with indifference, “What else is there?” He again repeated what was written, following Kṛṣṇa’s instruction, in order that the *gopīs* would quickly understand the desired deep meaning.

[15] When he spoke, they again thought to themselves, “By repeating the statement he is pointing out the unique qualities of what was previously instructed (he is indicating that Kṛṣṇa appears as a *sphūrti* to us). By revealing everything clearly (coming back personally) there should be no separation but by revealing that he will stay in Mathurā there is separation. He is saying that if a *sphūrti* appears to us there will be union even if he is in Mathurā. What is the use of meaningless sounds of words, with the grinding wheel crushing what has already been crushed?”

[16] Again they asked and he spoke the same words. The *gopīs* began to wonder in astonishment, “Again and again he has written the same words. There must be successively deeper meanings. The third repetition denies that he will appear as a *sphūrti* and indicates he will come directly. Determining this meaning, we should then consider carefully. Just as a person who wears ornaments may not appear beautiful, one who does not understand may speak but those words are useless.” || 11||

[17] When they asked again he spoke something else:

yathā bhūtāni bhūteṣu khaṃ vāyv-agnir jalaṃ mahī |
tathāhaṃ ca manaḥ-prāṇa-bhūtendriya-guṇāśrayaḥ ||

Just as the elements of nature—ether, air, fire, water and earth—are present in every created thing, so I am present within everyone's mind, life air and senses, and also within the physical elements and the modes of material nature. SB 10.47.29

[18] With this, the *gopīs* first considered internally, "He has given this instruction on *brahma-jñāna* in which he is the material cause of everything and the shelter of everything, in order to relinquish our suffering. But it is not satisfying to us because of the following fact. Sanaka and his brothers completely realize the bliss of Brahman in their hearts. That Brahman is well known. But the wind carrying the pollen from the lotus feet of the lotus-eyed Lord conquered that Brahman." ||12||

[19] They thought, "How can he who is the most generous in giving great mercy, give a sweet made of grain mixed with raw sugar while we enjoy the most exquisite sweet? Therefore we will again ask him."

On asking, he said the same thing. Then they considered in their hearts, "Ah! Ah! He is teaching that he is personally present here through instructions about Brahman. He means, 'You should take my *sphūrti* as my very form. Just as the elements, as the cause of their effects (visible objects), can be seen within the objects, I, the king of all black and beautiful objects, the cause of your minds and other functions, can be seen within you.'"

[20] They heard the statement a third time and after ascertaining the meaning, again asked. He then spoke the following:

ātmany evātmanātmānaṃ sṛje hanmy anupālaye |
ātma-māyānubhāvena bhūtendriya-guṇātmanā ||

By myself I create, sustain and withdraw myself within myself by the power of my personal energy, which comprises the material elements, the senses and the modes of nature. SB 10.47.30

[21] First the *gopīs* thought to themselves, “This seems to be related to the idea that he is God. It looks like he has made us understand he is God to disturb our hearts. So what if he is God? For some he is Brahman and for others he is God. Reflecting on this with intelligence, we consider that the most fortunate are those who play with him.” ||13||

[22 - 23] The second time they heard the statement, they came to this conclusion: “One should not see him as God but he has powers like God. *Ātma-māyā* is called his *icchā-śakti*. The wise say *ātma-māyā* is his will, and the *ātmā* follows its desire. The word *bhūta* in that verse means *nitya-siddha* objects, just as we say, “The Lord is the great entity (*mahad-bhūtam*).” Thus the meaning is ‘I create myself in myself along with *nitya-siddha* form, senses, qualities and objects by my free will, by the power of my most astonishing *icchā-śakti*.’ The phrase ‘I create myself’ means that he manifests himself to his devotees as if he were newly born. ‘I destroy myself’ means he disappears. He only appears to be destroyed. ‘I maintain myself’ means he protects all things that he has manifested.”

[24] The third time, they confirmed the meaning.

[25] Then Uddhava repeated another verse three times.

ātmā jñāna-mayaḥ śuddho vyatirikto ’guṇānvayaḥ |
suṣupti-svapna-jāgradbhir māyā-vṛttibhir īyate ||

> Being composed of pure consciousness, or knowledge, the soul is distinct from everything material and is uninvolved in the entanglements of the modes of nature. We can perceive the soul through the three functions of material nature known as wakefulness, sleep and deep sleep. SB 10.47.31

[26] When they first heard it they considered mentally, “He teaches us about his pure spiritual nature, uninfluenced by matter. Brahmā said, ‘We know Kṛṣṇa is the original soul of all living entities.’ (SB 10.14.55) But that is not proper to teach to us because we are engaged in worshiping him.”

[27] On hearing the verse the second time, they thought, “No, no. He praises himself in this verse by saying that he, the dark person, is also Paramātmā because he is always endowed with the deepest knowledge, is devoid of all faults, is superior to all and is endowed with all qualities.”

[28] With the third repetition they confirmed the meaning. Then Uddhava recited more verses three times:

> *yenendriyārthān dhyāyeta mṛṣā svapna-vad utthitaḥ |*
> *tan nirundhyād indriyāṇi vinidraḥ pratyapadyata ||*
> *etad-antaḥ samāmnāyo yogaḥ sāṅkhyaṃ manīṣiṇām |*
> *tyāgas tapo damaḥ satyaṃ samudrāntā ivāpagāḥ ||*
>
> As a person just arisen from sleep may continue to meditate on a dream even though it is illusory, so by the agency of the mind one meditates on the sense objects, which the senses can then obtain. Therefore one should become fully alert and bring the mind under control. According to intelligent authorities, this is the ultimate conclusion of all the Vedas, as well as

all practice of yoga, Sāṅkhya, renunciation, austerity, sense control and truthfulness, just as the sea is the ultimate destination of all rivers. SB 10.47.32-33

[29] On hearing the first time, they thought to themselves, “It looks like he is teaching us *yoga*, which attempts to stop the mental functions. Just as a person who has woken up meditates on false dream objects, one meditates by the mind on sense objects though knowing them to be false, and one attains the enjoyment of the senses by the mind. That mind, being without laziness (*vinidraḥ*), should be controlled.” Thinking for a moment that he was teaching them to control their minds, they heard a second time and concluded it was not so because of the following verse.

purāpi te te bahavo ’pi yoginas
tvad arpitehā nija-karma-labdhayā |
vibudhya bhaktyaiva kathopanītayā
prapedire ’ñjo ’cyuta te gatiṃ parām ||

O almighty Lord, in the past many *yogīs* in this world achieved the platform of devotional service by offering all their endeavors unto you and faithfully carrying out their prescribed duties. Through such devotional service, perfected by the processes of hearing and chanting about you, they came to understand you, O infallible one, and could easily surrender to you and achieve your supreme abode. SB 10.14.5

In that verse *yoga* is rejected. “He is speaking of meditation in order to stop the mind from thinking of separation.” Hearing the third time, they confirmed that meaning. Uddhava then repeated more verses three times with their consent.

yat tv ahaṃ bhavatīnāṃ vai dūre varte priyo dṛśām |
manasaḥ sannikarṣārthaṃ mad-anudhyāna-kāmyayā |
yathā dūra-care preṣṭhe mana āviśya vartate |
strīṇāñ ca na tathā cetaḥ sannikṛṣṭe ’kṣi-gocare ||

But the actual reason why I, the beloved object of your sight, have stayed far away from you is that I wanted to intensify your meditation upon me and thus draw your minds closer to me. When her lover is far away, a woman thinks of him more than when he is present before her. SB 10.47.34-35

[30 - 31] Hearing the first time, they thought in their hearts: “‘The reason why I am far from your eyes though I love you is that I have a desire that you meditate on me continuously because of their being no possibility of seeing me. In this situation, your minds will become absorbed in me, just like a woman thinks of a man when he is far away. This also means that I become absorbed in you by being far away.’ Therefore he wants us to absorb our minds in him, rather than prevent our minds from doing so. Oh! Oh! Why does he teach this, for even a moment without his association seems like a hundred ages? (SB 10.19.16) Were our minds not already absorbed in him?”

[32 - 33] On hearing a second time they meditated on the meaning, “Ah! Ah! The real meaning is ‘Because of thinking of me with your minds I will become visible to you (*sannikarṣaḥ*).’ This is his intention. ‘I will directly appear in two ways. First, there is entrance into the mind by chiefly the eye as in the waking state. Direct sight by the eye is inferred chiefly by the mind as in the dream state. While in Vraja I appeared in the first way and now, being in Mathurā, I appear in the second way.’

When the mind produces the image it is like a dream but actually it is not a dream since it is my direct *sphūrti.* Now that *sphūrti* will appear appropriately. Since I feel embarrassed by the elders I have visibly gone far away and my association with you must be hidden. Thinking in this way I have done this. You should be satisfied with the *sphūrti.* This is the way in which one stops the mind from thinking of separation, as previously mentioned.'"

[34] When they had confirmed this on the third hearing, Uddhava spoke two more verses.

> *mayy āveśya manaḥ kṛṣṇe vimuktāśeṣa-vṛtti yat |*
> *anusmarantyo māṃ nityam acirān mām upaiṣyatha ||*
> *yā mayā krīḍatā rātryā vane 'smin vraja āsthitāḥ |*
> *alabdha-rāsāḥ kalyāṇyo māpus mad-vīrya-cintayā ||*
>
> Because your minds are totally absorbed in me and free from all other engagement, you remember me always, and so you will very soon have me again in your presence. Although some *gopīs* had to remain in the cowherd village and so could not join the *rāsa* dance to sport with me at night in the forest, they were nonetheless fortunate. Indeed, they attained me by thinking of my potent pastimes. SB 10.47.36-37

[35] They thought to themselves, "Previously we derived the meaning of his words gradually. This time we have realized his real intention in the beginning. The word Kṛṣṇa, mentioned at the beginning, is modified by various elements to produce the final meaning."

[36] They thought, "The meaning is this. *Yat* means because. The word Kṛṣṇa is used to indicate a specific person, and rejects any other name like Vāsudeva. Because you absorb your minds, free of unlimited thoughts of separation, in me, Kṛṣṇa, and constantly

remember me, because you have desired pastimes and never give up those memories, you will quickly come to me, being near me. The second verse shows by example that he has *sphūrtis.* It is said that some *gopīs* were caring for their husbands and therefore did not come. The wise understand that this indicates *gopīs* other than you (who participated in the *rāsa* dance). Prevented by their husbands they remained in Vraja. In that forest, named Vṛndāvana, I can be seen even now, though this is confidential. Previously I, specifically Kṛṣṇa, played in that forest, visibly (*prakaṭa*). Those other *gopīs* did not attain the *rāsa* dance at that time. But they attained me, Kṛṣṇa, in an *aprakaṭa* form, with an ocean of pastimes, by thinking of my powerful pastimes."

[37] They continued thinking, "The words me and my (*mām, mayā, mayi, mad*), used six times, indicating Kṛṣṇa, strongly emphasize the meaning. In saying, 'O auspicious women!' he indicates that they are *nitya-siddhas,* not performers of *sādhana* like those who gave up their bodies. It is not possible for you, the most skillful women with *nitya-siddha* forms, to make a show of giving up bodies when I appear as your only husband and you give up your *māyā* husbands and children."

[38] Having said this, the reciter thought, "Though it is understood that bodies are despicable, strong attraction to them arises in this world, covering the criticism. Similarly, in Vraja, with understanding of Kṛṣṇa's powers and qualities, natural attraction, causing conflict within, does not consider good or bad." ||14||

[39 - 40] He then spoke aloud:

Understanding the meaning, which brought about meeting with Kṛṣṇa within, they were pleased with

Uddhava, and began speaking sweetly to him. Filled with the highest bliss for two *muhūrtas,* they worshiped him. Ah! Ah! After that gradually they returned to external vision and began to lament:

We do not know whether we are happy or sad but we know about the death of Kaṃsa (which brought us separation). We ask you this. After being surrounded by the Yadus and killing the enemies why does he stay in Mathurā? ||15||

We know the pain of desire within, because we are similar to the Mathurā women. We ask if he has extinguished the pain of desire in the women of Mathurā. He did extinguish our pain by the glance from the edge of his softly smiling lotus eyes. Ah! That is even now present before us. ||16||

Affection of a woman for her lover is very sweet. If the affection is for Kṛṣṇa, that affection is superior to nectar. Therefore we speak to you. Please listen. Why does Kṛṣṇa, whose heart understands the best affection, not show affection to women at all times? ||17||

Let Kṛṣṇa enjoy with the city women. That joy exists in him. It is best that we have separated from him. However, one question unsettles our hearts. Tell us if he ever talks anything about us country girls? ||18||

Does he remember those nights, glorious with the lotus and moon in Vṛndāvana, with all his beloved women? Performing the *rāsa* dance with ankle bells jingling, singing his glories, he enjoyed on those nights with excitement. ||19||

Will he come to us, burning in the summer sun of separation, and show his sweet form, made of nectar like the moon? When will he shower us with his limbs like the

full moon just as Indra showers water from clouds on the tender forest? ||20||

Here he rules the village and there he is contaminated by having the position of a king. Here he has cowherds for friends and there princes are his best friends. Here he stays with the *gopīs* controlled by Cupid and there, princesses desire to praise him. How will he come here? ||21||

Lakṣmī resides on his attractive chest. How can the city women or the village women reside there? You speak the truth. Give up desiring him. The prostitute Piṅgalā gave up her desires as insignificant. ||22||

Though we have wanted to give up our desire for him for a long time, desire binds us up even more tightly at every moment. He is like Varuṇa and that desire for him is like his noose. We do not know how it has happened. ||23||

We do not develop such strong desire on seeing his beauty, youth and pastimes. Hear another reason: when he jokes in private or vows his great love, desire forever sits in our hearts. ||24||

It is well known throughout the worlds that Lakṣmī, though not desired by him, does not leave him for a moment. He has made hundreds of promises to us by his own will. We do not know how to give him up. ||25||

Because of desire, Lakṣmī cannot give up his sweetness even for a moment, though she has been informed that he does not desire her. Though his lack of desire is strong, he also does not reject her. The situation is most difficult. ||26||

The sages say that Kṛṣṇa does not desire Lakṣmī. But the wise say that this rejection is only pretense. If he really does not desire her, then just as he gave up the women of Vraja, will he not give her up in a second? ||27||

Previously Kṛṣṇa along with Balarāma used to play his flute for the cows at the river, mountain and forest. All this makes us strongly desire to see him. And particularly his beautiful foot prints suddenly split our hearts. ||28||

Our intelligence has long been stolen by his attractive pastimes, movements, smile, glance and speech. Our intelligence now stays in Mathurā and cannot be retrieved. Please tell us by what means we can forget him even a little. ||29||

Oh beautiful lord, master of Lakṣmī! O beloved! O lord of Vraja, who relieves the dependent cowherd people of distress! We are not concerned with our own suffering. But please save the people of Vraja from an ocean of suffering, since you are called Govinda. ||30||

[41] Seeing the *gopīs* again thinking of separation from Kṛṣṇa, Uddhava again read the letter, as Kṛṣṇa had instructed. By the power of the words, independent like a great *mantra*, they became pacified. After this, thinking of Kṛṣṇa and Uddhava as non-different according to Kṛṣṇa's instruction, free from suffering, they then worshiped Uddhava.

[42] He stayed for several months, going to them every day in the morning like a doctor, destroying disease to make them understand Kṛṣṇa's instructions. Developing the highest *bhakti* which manifested in newer and newer ways, he then offered them respects by praising them as follows.

Surrounded by social restrictions arising from *dharma*, they attained Kṛṣṇa while rejecting those restrictions, thereby surpassing the meaning of *karma-kāṇḍa* and *jñāna-kāṇḍa.* They have become the object of praise for people like me. Those who think they had loose conduct go to hell. ||31||

Those desiring liberation, those who are liberated, the devotees, and those desiring devotion all achieved the same goal when Kṛṣṇa appeared. But the *gopīs* have *prema* which astonishes me. Without knowing about that *prema* even Brahmā's birth is useless. ||32||

What are the *gopīs,* with attractive qualities who play in Vṛndāvana in comparison to men and women who deviate from thinking of Kṛṣṇa? The cause of difference is the *gopīs' prema.* If that is so, can he reject them, since he responds to ignorant people who worship him? ||33||

Lakṣmī cannot be compared to the *gopīs* because, desiring him, she performed austerities for a long time but did not attain him. But taking the *gopīs* as himself, he embraced them with his arms and did not desire to give them up. The women of Svarga are insignificant compared to them. ||34||

Having conquered all young women headed by Lakṣmī, the *gopīs,* the eternal consorts of Kṛṣṇa, are known as the greatest Lakṣmīs. If that is so, accusations that they had illicit connections must be false. That infamy was only an arrangement to reveal their unrestricted *prema.* ||35||

Those women who worship Kṛṣṇa while following the social norms dictated by *dharma* follow an easy path. Their fame is desirable. But let me always be born at the

feet of the *gopīs* who are worshiped by devotees of Kṛṣṇa and who gave up everything for worshiping Kṛṣṇa. ||36||

It is well known that those feet were worshiped for a long time by Brahmā, Śiva, Indra and Lakṣmī, as well as Sanaka and other *yogīs* with a desire to attain those feet. But the *gopīs* served his feet by offering their breasts to his feet to relieve him of fatigue while wandering in the forest, but fearing his feet were too soft, they touched them only slightly. ||37||

What to speak of the *gopīs* who never rejected giving pleasure to Kṛṣṇa joyfully, I bow down to the foot dust of all those related to the *gopīs*, whose songs concerning Kṛṣṇa, glorified in the whole universe, purify the three worlds along with its leaders. ||38||

[43] Then Madhukaṇṭha concluded:

When Kṛṣṇa continually praises the *gopīs* I think he is referring to the *gopīs* in general, but in his heart he is referring to Rādhā. She took the bee as Kṛṣṇa's messenger, spoke to it using attractive words filled with a treasure of *mahābhāva* which unsteadies the heart, and gave up hesitation in speaking to Uddhava, who became most astonished. ||39||

Uddhava, who is considered equal to Kṛṣṇa, bowed to the *gopīs'* foot dust, saying that Lakṣmī could not compare to them. I offer respects to Rādhā, whose body is nectar for her lover, who is accompanied by the *cakora* bird Kṛṣṇa, and who is worshiped by all. ||40||

[44] He then made a request:

O goddess! O wave of mercy! Best of Lakṣmīs! Please forgive me for revealing your bewilderment caused by madness of *prema* while Kṛṣṇa is listening. Poets

generally have hard, proud minds. Therefore they cannot understand shyness and suffering of others. They speak to reveal their cleverness. ||41||

O Rādhikā! I have seen that you and Kṛṣṇa have reached a state of madness with every statement in my description. But by seeing each other, from taking the best magic medicine, you have recovered and have gained self-control. ||42||

[45] Concluding in this way and satisfying Rādhā, Kṛṣṇa, Lalitā and their friends, the two went to their rooms, satisfied with gaining their mercy. Rādhā and Mādhava, at a suitable time, taking permission from all, went to their chamber of love and entered in the ocean of bliss.

[46] Snigdhakaṇṭha then spoke at the morning session in Nanda's assembly with Kṛṣṇa present:

[47] In this way Uddhava passed several months in Vraja.

What Kṛṣṇa spoke to Uddhava in Mathurā, Uddhava spoke to the *gopīs* in Vraja.

Kṛṣṇa became personally present constantly in Vraja as part of his pastimes and produced happiness during those months within Uddhava and the *gopīs.* ||43||

Uddhava, seeing the symptoms of Kṛṣṇa's *sphūr*ti in the people of Vraja, informed them that this was actually Kṛṣṇa. When they understood and believed this, he thought of leaving, and meeting with them, politely asked for permission. ||44||

[48] The reciter then began describing topics meant for the night assembly of Rādhā, but spoke them in the daytime assembly to complete the composition.

[49] Snigdhakaṇṭha spoke:

Filled with Kṛṣṇa *prema,* Uddhava asked and received permission to leave. Śukadeva describes this:

> *atha gopīr anujñāpya yaśodāṃ nandam eva ca |*
> *gopān āmantrya dāśārho yāsyānn āruruhe ratham ||*
>
> Uddhava, the descendant of Daśārha, then took permission to leave from the *gopīs* and from mother Yaśodā and Nanda Mahārāja. He bade farewell to all the cowherd men and, about to depart, mounted his chariot. SB 10.47.64

Uddhava requested with utmost politeness and the *gopīs* responded with transformations such as fainting. Remembering this, my life airs become immediately pulverized. Therefore this scene cannot be fully described. ||45||

[50] I will reveal Rādhā's polite words as an indication.

"O Uddhava! I do not speak so boldly about Kṛṣṇa as you do. I am as hard as a thunderbolt and he is soft as butter. O intelligent Uddhava! Finally teach us how to give up affection for him, like an old piece of cloth gradually falling to pieces." ||46 - 47||

[51] Saying this and lamenting uncontrollably she handed Uddhava a sealed letter expressing her words, though her hands were helpless:

"Do not abandon the women of Vraja out of fear of defamation. The moon does not reject the spots (like a rabbit in shape) which take shelter of it." ||48||

[52] What more should be said about separation which is beyond the intelligence?

[53] Then he began the daytime recitation:

Before Uddhava mounted the chariot, Nanda and the cowherd men brought and offered butter, milk, cheese and various other gifts. They then thought, “In order to destroy this suffering caused by separation from Kṛṣṇa, full of friendliness, Uddhava, instructing us about Kṛṣṇa as the Lord, told us many things while being neutral. Accepting that Kṛṣṇa is the Lord, we should answer with our opinion.”

[54] Considering this, with tears in their eyes they spoke:

If Kṛṣṇa were the Lord, our senses will still be completely dedicated to him. We will not be indifferent to him in any circumstance. ||49||

May we always have attraction to the Lord in the form of Kṛṣṇa, while we wander in this world by the force of *karma*, under the desire of the Lord. ||50||

O Uddhava! Guruship is given to others by instruction. But guruship is *nitya-siddha* in your *guru*. What more can be taught to you (who have all knowledge)? ||51||

Covering their faces with their cloth they cried. Recovering, they followed Uddhava for a long way, embraced him, and, gathering together, eventually returned to Vraja.

[55] Desiring news from Vraja, Kṛṣṇa counted the days, fortnights and months. To fulfill his desires and get a view of Vraja he climbed the watchtower and looked at the road. Suddenly he saw Uddhava approaching. He was overcome with anticipation. Following Uddhava for some distance, Kṛṣṇa, taking him as the personification of Gokula, embraced him and brought him to a private place. First he saw Uddhava’s pleased face and then he asked only about his health. After having him recover from the journey, he inquired from him.

Kṛṣṇa asked with compassion, about the elders, his father, his friends, followers, and the cows both together and individually. He did not ask about his mother because tears rose and choked his throat. ||52||

[56] Quickly Uddhava revealed all the auspicious news and removed Kṛṣṇa's unsteadiness. Starting with the first day's news he first narrated in brief what would be told for many days to come. At last he said this:

I solved half their problem by your influence. The other half will be resolved by your going there. ||53||

We concluded previously that *bhakti* to you is excellent to the extent that it is devoid of *karma* or *jñāna.* But I have seen that the excellent *prema* of the Vraja residents, with sentiments such as accepting you as their son, illuminates all your other devotees. ||54||

[57] Having spoken this far, thinking of what should be spoken in the evening, the reciter spoke to himself, "It is not surprising that the sentiment of thinking of you as their son surpasses all other devotees, but the *gopīs'* thoughts of you as their illicit lover is superior even to that. From what I have seen, I have narrated here the words of Rādhā among all your dear *gopīs.* Hearing those words, the *gopīs* first believe them, then disregard them and finally faint. Your agitation stops me from speaking. I have such a cruel mind." ||55 - 56||

[58] He then spoke aloud, "After conversing on many subjects, the best of devotees, Uddhava, then showed the gifts expressing *prema* that the residents of Vraja had sent. His mother sent food, his father sent ornaments, his friends sent forest fruit, some women sent pearl necklaces and others sent many other gifts. By the type

of offering, Kṛṣṇa identified the donor. But afraid of tears, he inspected the articles from afar.” ||57||

[59] Thinking in his mind that he would replace the words “some women” with his “beloveds” in the evening talk, the reciter continued:

Kṛṣṇa gave the articles to Vasudeva and Ugrasena that Nanda had sent for them. ||58||

[60] Kṛṣṇa arranged a meeting between Uddhava, Balarāma and Rohiṇī. This was similar to the meeting between Uddhava and Kṛṣṇa.

[61] When Rohiṇī and Balarāma saw with unsteady minds all the excellent articles sent by Nanda and Yaśodā, their hearts melted because of attraction. What happened after that need not be described.

[62] Snigdhakaṇṭha then concluded, “O Nanda! That Kṛṣṇa who sent Uddhava with great agitation to pacify the people of Vraja and who made them partially recover, and appeared as *sphūrti* to take your association, is now present personally on your lap. Pleasing his mother and all others, he gives us bliss.” ||59||

[63] Giving all people bliss, worshiped by the other bards, the two reciters went to their rooms. In the evening, at the assembly of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa they spoke in depth about the topics spoken previously in brief.

[64] He then concluded the evening recitation, “O Rādhā! Kṛṣṇa did not mention your name to Uddhava, fearing complete bewilderment. Here in Goloka because of the absence of separation causing bewilderment, will you, full of joy, give bewilderment to his heart?” ||60||

[65] The pastimes of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa, gold and sapphire blue in color, who are controlled by the rapture of unlimited *rasa,* then shone with brilliance.

O Kṛṣṇa! O Caitanya! O Rūpa and Sanātana! O Gopāla! O Raghunātha! O Vallabha who has attained Vraja! Please protect me!

Part Two - Satisfaction of Balarāma’s Arrival in Vraja

Chapter Thirteen

Binding Jarāsandha

O Kṛṣṇa! O Caitanya! O Rūpa and Sanātana! O Gopāla! O Raghunātha! O Vallabha who has attained Vraja! Please protect me! ||1||

[1] Having satisfied the desires of the residents of Vraja with Uddhava's coming, we will now begin to satisfy their desires with Baladeva's arrival.

[2] Madhukaṇṭha and Snigdhakaṇṭha have narrated two Campūs filled with stories of Kṛṣṇa from his birth, which intoxicate the minds of the saintly, and finally satisfied the desires of the people of Vraja by their attainment of Kṛṣṇa after the killing of Dantavakra, which brought them back to life. This event will be later narrated with the proof from scriptures like *Hari-vaṃsa* and *Padma Purāṇa*. This has been mentioned previously several times. All the other remaining stories will now be told.

[3 - 4] The next day when Nanda and others were waiting thirstily at the morning session, Madhukaṇṭha began to think. The time has come to describe Kṛṣṇa's pastimes after going to Kubjā's house, after having described other events.

"This pastime is not inappropriate from Kṛṣṇa—who is a wealth of compassion, showing ever-fresh mercy to persons like Pūtanā—after his mind became settled when Uddhava returned from Vraja and spoke consoling words. He performed this pastime to pacify Uddhava and

others who were always eager that he go to Vraja to create happiness there. Śukadeva has not praised Kubjā's love as being faultless because of a relation to lust whereas Śukadeva and others have extensively praised the Vraja *gopīs' prema* in the highest terms. Kṛṣṇa accepted her love to emphasize the love of the *gopīs* which is universally praised as *mahābhāva.* Therefore this incident should not be described in the general and private (*sakhīs'*) assembly as it will cause embarrassment in both places."

[5] After thinking this, he spoke aloud:

In this way Uddhava protected the people of Vraja.

[6] Desiring to hear about Kṛṣṇa's pastimes in Mathurā, everyone in Vraja gathered respectfully.

Nanda engaged two pairs of praiseworthy reciters of Purāṇas and dynasties as messengers, seeing that they were qualified.

[7] The messengers had to meet Kṛṣṇa privately through Uddhava's arrangement, hear the news and return with it. We know that Kṛṣṇa knows everything within everyone. He is now the combination of all omniscient people (and therefore will understand our position).

[8] The first two messengers went and returned. They reported the establishment of well-being in all aspects and the sending of Akrūra to meet the Pāṇḍavas. They brought the following letter to Nanda.

"You pampered me in my infant years, and because of my fickle nature I ordered worship of Govardhana and it assisted me by its mercy (by rising up in my hands). Attractive Govardhana increases our happiness at all

times. O father, you should worship that hill every year.” ||2||

[9] When the second pair of messengers went, they only departed––they did not return immediately because Jarāsandha, gathering armies of many kings, broke Mathurā by many assaults.

[10] When the two messengers did not return, the people of Vraja became frightened and began moving far from Vraja, avoiding it with great consternation. After a long time, the two messengers returned. When they returned, all were frightened to ask anything. When friends with uncertainty looked at their faces, the two replied with three words, “Fine, fine, fine.” Welcoming them and surrounding them, friends with servants and Nanda said, “Tell us first in summary and then let us hear the news in detail.”

[11] The two messengers said, “Having destroyed all his armies, your two sons caught Jarāsandha and made him miserable. They later freed him out of contempt. He disappeared because of shame and returned home.”

[12] When a great uproar arose with the people of Vraja as they shouted, “Speak of Kṛṣṇa, speak of Kṛṣṇa, the destroyer of obstacles!” Nanda said with tears and hair standing on end, “Please describe the details completely.”

[13] The two messengers said, “Kaṃsa had two wives, named Asti and Prāpti, who were the daughters of Jarāsandha. When their husband died they went to their father.”

[14] Nanda said, “Why did they go? Though they were widows, were they not trusted by the Yadus?”

[15] The messengers spoke with a laugh: “With tattered clothing, unbound hair over their breasts, faded faces and worn head-cloaks, they left Mathurā incognito like misfortune personified. Arrogant travelers coming to Mathurā, seeing them and asking about them, laughed loudly. The two, Asti and Prāpti, equivalent to Kaṃsa’s infamy, came to their father’s house.” ||3||

[16] Nanda said, “Let that be. When the two widows, angry as Caṇḍī, came to their father what did they say?”

[17] The messengers said, “They spoke about matters relating to being left without protection by their husband, indicating that Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma had acted unjustly.”

[18] Nanda said, “How is that?”

[19 - 21] The messengers said, “They said as follows: ‘Out of curiosity Kaṃsa brought the two boys through Akrūra. First they killed the dyer, broke the bow without fighting, and killed Kuvalayāpīḍa near the king’s gate while playing. Kaṃsa appeared splendid for a long time while excitedly watching the wrestling contest between the two boys and his wrestlers. They killed all the incompetent wrestlers. Let that be. They then killed the king with little effort. Ah! What should we say, with burnt faces? They pulled him by his hair.’”

[22] Nanda said, “Then what happened?”

[23] They said, “Their father could not tolerate this. With the zeal of Yamarāja, in order to deal with the intolerable Yadus, he surrounded beautiful, well-protected Mathurā on all sides with twenty-three *akṣauhiṇīs* under his control. What more can be said? Except for Bhīṣma and the Pāṇḍavas, all the *kṣatriya* kings from the Himalayas,

Vindhyas and Sindhu appeared there with bows in their hands.”

[24] Nanda asked fearfully, “Then what happened?”

[25] The messengers said, “In great fear, as if afflicted by a forest fire, in great distress, the Yadus came before Kṛṣṇa, the result of their dynasty’s austerities, shining like the moon.”

[26] Nanda said, “Ha! The Yadus fell into misfortune.”

[27 - 29] The messengers said, “Hear what happened next. Thinking those armies to be like grass, Kṛṣṇa thought to himself, ‘As I have desired, fate has made arrangements. I have desired to punish all those who disobey the Vedas. Somewhere or other, the violent should be killed. Except for Jarāsandha I will gather and kill all these assembled ignorant armies. In order to kill all the demons I will not kill Jarāsandha first: A person should keep one crow cawing to kill all the crows.’” ||4||

[30] Knowing Balarāma agreed, Kṛṣṇa desired a suitable chariot. Suddenly a chariot equipped with *cakra,* conch, bow, club, lotus house and sitting place, carrying a flag with Garuḍa’s insignia, appeared from the sky with four horses which did not wander from the path and with a charioteer (Dāruka). Balarāma saw another even more remarkable chariot with plough, pestle, and a flag with a *tāla* tree insignia.

[31] Everyone said in astonishment, “What happened next?”

[32] Nanda said, “We have seen such astonishing events from Kṛṣṇa’s childhood. Nārāyaṇa is helping him. Now, please say what happened next.”

[33] The messengers said:

Seeing that war was unavoidable, gathering all the necessary weapons for warfare, putting on armor, the two faced the enemy with a few friends. Displaying amazing strength, they emerged from the fortress. As they emerged from the fort, the two appeared like the moon and sun arising from the edge of the Eastern Mountain. When they blew their conches they appeared like monsoon and autumn clouds. The sound was like deep roaring for their friends and like thunder for their enemies. Hear about another astonishing event.

The two boys were very tender and the enemy was frightening. But in the battle their qualities reversed. Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma became frightening and the enemy became frightened. ||5||

Seeing Kṛṣṇa, Jarāsandha became frightened, but making a show of ignoring that fear, he displayed pride. ||6||

Leaving Kṛṣṇa aside, Jarāsandha fought with Balarāma. That bad strategy produced the Śiva-fever weapon after rejecting the Viṣṇu-fever weapon. ||7||

[34] When Jarāsandha spoke disrespectful words out of fear, Kṛṣṇa laughed loudly and spoke:

> *na vai śūrā vikatthante darśayanty eva pauruṣam |*
> *na gṛhnīmo vaco rājan nāturasya mumūrṣataḥ ||*
>
> Real heroes do not simply boast but rather show their prowess in action. We cannot take seriously the words of one who is full of anxiety and who wants to die. SB 10.50.19

[35] What he said was quite proper: “The warrior does not boast. Boasting words demean one’s strength. Your boasting reveals your weakness. This way of fighting

does not reveal bravery but the desire for death. This is befitting a sick man, not a great king. Since we see you are not steady, now we will not accept your proposition that we kill you."

[36] Nanda said, "Then what happened?"

[37] The two messengers said, "Just as Kṛṣṇa criticized him, he criticized Kṛṣṇa. Since Jarāsandha promised to fight with Balarāma, he surrounded the two with twenty-three *akṣauhiṇīs."*

[38] Nanda said in fear, "Then what happened?"

[39] They said:

As the sun dissipates icy fog, the two made them all powerless by their powers. All the armies became useless. Kṛṣṇa, accepting to be their enemy to destroy the darkness caused by their weapons, became a thunder bolt against the enemies who were like elephants. Disturbed by the immense clouds of dust, losing all knowledge of the events, suddenly not seeing the two chariots with insignia of Garuḍa and the *tāla* tree, the women in a distant place simultaneously fainted.

Seeing the enemy arrows falling like showers from the clouds upon his troops, Kṛṣṇa drew his Śārṅga bow at leisure and drove away the cloud of those arrows by the wind caused by the twanging of his bow string. ||8||

The armor of both parties became useless as it fell from their bodies. The enemy could not avoid being slaughtered. Kṛṣṇa's troops warded them off from a distance with their arrows. ||9||

Kṛṣṇa crushed the host of kings composed of useless enemies. He became joyful, with hairs standing on end when fearful Jarāsandha came close. ||10||

When Kṛṣṇa pulled arrows from his quiver and shot them, people thought that he had divided himself into a million, ten million or a hundred million forms to shoot all those arrows. In that battle the limbs of the enemy were severed and lay scattered about. The competitive spirit of the enemy could be seen (though without success). ||11||

It was not astonishing that Kṛṣṇa was a cloud, his bow was a rainbow and his arrows were lightning bolts in that battle. The blood of the enemies was a river, and human bodies, horses and camels were like fish. ||12||

Seeing the pestle in Balarāma's hand, the enemy laughed loudly with open mouths, "He is a village boy!" Later they lay dead with open mouths because Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma quickly crushed them with their strength. ||13||

The women of the city said, "The twenty-three *akṣauhiṇīs* quickly started the war and were quickly defeated." Then nothing was left, because Kṛṣṇa alone appeared in front of everyone after defeating everyone. ||14||

All those killed by Kṛṣṇa's arrows or Balarāma's pestle were thrown by Balarāma into the river of blood using his plough. ||15||

[40] When all were killed—their pride crushed with the destruction of many cruel warriors—just as a lion pursues an elephant, Balarāma pursued Jarāsandha, without a chariot, who was trying to flee. Balarāma quickly grabbed the only surviving warrior, just as a lion grabs a running dog. Capturing him, he brought him to

the slaughtering ground and bound him up with a noose to destroy his strength.

[41] Jarāsandha was bound with human ropes to insult him. But while all were watching, Kṛṣṇa released him because of his desire to destroy countless persons related to him.

[42] Though released, his neck remained bent as if still bound up. He fled and made attempts to perform austerities. With withered body, he went on a lonely path, without weapons or chariot. He was recognized by a person of his own city carrying a strong axe. He offered Jarāsandha respects and his full affection. But Jarāsandha felt ashamed. By word of mouth it was heard that many kings, feeling sympathy for him, met with him, coming from wherever they had fled. They made him give up the idea of performing austerities. They spoke to him.

“Understand that if a few Yadu troops could defeat our unlimited warriors, it is the work of fate. That is their strength. We think it has become stronger after many births. You are a king. You have a young body. Going to the forest does not suit you. Austerity in the forest which gives suffering, for protecting other people, is not proper.” ||16 - 17||

[43] Nanda said, “Let that be. Please glorify the activities of Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma.”

[44] The messengers said:

With their armies Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma entered the dense array of enemy troops. They were not injured at all. ||18||

[45] When victory was achieved, some gave up shyness, some gathered in joy. All the Yadus brought Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma home with a desire to celebrate.

[46] Becoming greatly joyful at seeing this prowess, through Uddhava we received permission from Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma to tell you these events and then we came here.

[47] After recounting the messengers' words, Madhukaṇṭha said, "Repeatedly Jarāsandha attempted to rid the world of the Yadus. The Yadus fought many battles with him. This was reported in Vraja by the two messengers. Some of the relevant details will be told."

[48] Saying this, Madhukaṇṭha became choked up. Nanda, bringing Kṛṣṇa near, embraced him. The bards of Vraja then recited the following verses.

Hearing about the death of his son-in-law from his two daughters, Jarāsandha quickly came to Mathurā. Seeing him, Kṛṣṇa spoke while thinking of Balarāma. ||19||

"It is good that Jarāsandha has eagerly come." From the heavens Kṛṣṇa obtained weapons and chariots. He considered them lucky signs. ||20||

Along with his brother he fought and defeated the enemy and tied up Jarāsandha. Just as the sun destroys snow, Kṛṣṇa destroyed the enemy armies. ||21||

From the broken bodies of the enemy, blood flowed like rivers. What more should be said? Kṛṣṇa caught Jarāsandha and tied him up nicely. ||22||

In this way sixteen times he defeated Jarāsandha and killed many others. Now he appears in Vraja, glancing upon it, nourishing the place with showers of nectar. ||23||

[49] Madhukaṇṭha then spoke in the assembly of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa:

“When the women of Vraja, his beloved *gopīs*, heard of his battle with the enemies, they forgot their suffering and their hearts began to tremble. O Rādhā! It is confirmed that the enemies of the devotees have been conquered, and he has now returned. He plays, engaging in newer and newer pastimes with you.” ||24 - 25||

[50] As previously, having pleased the listeners, the two reciters endowed with all good qualities went to their residences. Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa together entered their abode of love for accomplishing their fixed pastimes while feeling united and attained their desires fully.

Chapter Fourteen

Defeating Kālayavana

[1] The next day Snigdhakaṇṭha spoke to the people of Vraja, shining with great bliss because of showers of nectar from seeing Kṛṣṇa.

[2] Desiring the return of Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma, Nanda with great festivity gave charity, and performed a sacrifice for eternal auspiciousness to destroy Kṛṣṇa's enemies. In that sacrifice the people of Vraja had intense thoughts of Kṛṣṇa, and a vision of him followed. They did this because they desired that Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma should live in an invincible fort surrounded by brave warriors. The cowherds spent their time eagerly hearing news from messengers who arrived periodically as previously. They heard that foolish Jarāsandha, gathering armies, constantly made plans to attack.

[3] Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma, without desire to defeat him, defeated him by the Yadus under their protection. But the two took no notice of him.

Know that just as the elements produce the material universe by the power of the Lord, so the Yadus conquered Jarāsandha by the power of Kṛṣṇa. ||1||

[4] Hear this verse which is famous everywhere.

It is not astonishing that Kṛṣṇa destroyed all those armies but it is astonishing that Jarāsandha endured so much bodily suffering in gathering the armies. Fire quickly burns ten-thousand sticks to ashes. The

hardships of a person who must collect all that wood are most astonishing! ||2||

When Jarāsandha came the first few times, people were frightened. Afterwards, they simply laughed. ||3||

[5] Having accepted his daughters back, Jarāsandha again came to Mathurā. The verse of two comedians with question and answer is recited everywhere:

Who is the fool who was offended by his enemy but, remembering this vividly, made great efforts constantly against the enemy? It is Jarāsandha. ||4||

[6] Hearing news of Kṛṣṇa, Nanda performed his auspicious sacrifice in his house. He offered ghee and other ingredients into the fire. At the end, he gave unlimited wealth to the *devatās* and *brāhmaṇas.*

[7] When some disguised messengers were going on the road to Mathurā, two special messengers arrived and told the remaining story. Their faces blossomed in offering the joyful news.

[8] “O king! This news has just arrived. Your son went to Vidarbha and something auspicious happened.”

[9] Nanda said, “Oh! Why did Kṛṣṇa go so far away?”

[10] The two messengers said, “They went searching for Jarāsandha.”

[11] Nanda said, “What did they do there? He clearly went there in haste with an unprepared mind.”

[12] The messengers said, “All gathered there because the king of Vidarbha was going to give his daughter to Śiśupāla. Kṛṣṇa went there to curb those proud kings.”

[13] Nanda said with fear, “Tell the rest of the story.”

[14] The messengers said:

Respectable Nanda! Do not think anything else. Your son went there out of curiosity. When he arrived at the house of Kratha and Kaiśiki, who had pure *bhakti* and were famous as great kings for a long time in Vidarbha, his mere effulgence afflicted the evil kings.

When Kṛṣṇa came to Kratha's and Kaiśika's house, the kings accompanying Bhīṣmaka thought that he was as frightening as death and considered their end had come. When the sun daily rises over the Eastern Mountain it creates terror in the night creatures even without showing its power. ||5||

[15] Garuḍa with his famous conquering powers assisted Kṛṣṇa.

Expert at causing disturbances which destroy lands on mountains in the ocean, expert at destroying other birds, able to uproot trees by the wind emanating from his wings, radiating light to quickly agitate the eyes of thousands of demons who were evil kings, the king of birds, destroyer of sin, became visible. ||6||

O affectionate king! The effulgence of Garuḍa was fierce towards others but to the Lord was his affection not most gentle? ||7||

[16] Nanda in bliss said, "Then what happened?"

[17] The messengers said, "When he had cut the pride of all the enemies, Kratha and Kaiśika came and offered Kṛṣṇa a proposal. 'O king of all knowledge! By your accepting our proposal, our acceptance of you is also accepted.'"

[18] Kṛṣṇa said, "Please order me as you wish."

[19] They said:

A throbbing desire to be fulfilled resides in our hearts. Being merciful please fulfill that desire. We make the following request. ||8||

[20] We have heard that all the demons who hate you and desire to marry Rukmiṇī, Bhīṣmaka's daughter, will gather in the morning. We also know that you are thinking of killing them. It is possible that you will accept to be king, though you have not done so. All the evil kings are laughing. They say 'How can this person come here? He should give up shame by taking a lower seat.' Since you have come here, it is not possible to go or leave that assembly. Therefore we think that it is not a fitting situation. We make this request: accept this excellent kingdom of ours. Having accepted it, accept us as your servants."

[21] Nanda said, "Then what happened?"

[22] The messengers said, "Though your son considers all positions in this world to be useless, for showing mercy to devotees he accepts such positions to a small degree." ||9||

[23] Nanda said, "What was the agreement?"

[24] The messengers said, "He was silent. Inferring his acceptance, the two devotees with folded hands spoke with excitement. Please put your lotus feet on our throne."

[25] Though they were hesitant, they saw that the throne was attractive to Kṛṣṇa. When they were about to offer it to him, a statement from a messenger of Indra was heard in the sky:

"O kings! Do not offer this throne which was previously used by your dynasty and then discarded. We will later

give him a new throne from heaven. Of course, even Indra and the *devatās* are useless, for previously Kṛṣṇa was worshiped by Brahmā, Śiva and Lakṣmī. When he becomes the king, after some time we will worship him." ||10||

[26] The two kings were happy and, shining brightly, selected intelligent people as their messengers and sent the messengers to the assembly of Jarāsandha.

[27] When the assembly heard this and began thinking, Indra spoke though not visible. Citrāṅgada spoke his message:

"O kings! I am Indra. I will speak to you. Please listen. Kṛṣṇa is to be worshiped by all. It is true that in Vraja he was bathed at Govardhana, bearing the name Govinda. Whoever will not witness and accept his coronation using jeweled pots at this place so that he becomes a king should be killed by Kṛṣṇa. ||11||

[28] The people of Vraja, full of joy asked, "Then what happened?"

[29] The two messengers said, "Some who had come there became frightened and went to the coronation place. Kṛṣṇa gave permission with respect and they followed him. But Jarāsandha and others stinking with pride did not go at all. With agitated minds they informed their representatives that they would not go.

Though Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma had the opportunity to kill Jarāsandha they did not do so. They instead showed power and competitive spirit. But Jarāsandha did not give up his crooked ways. ||12||

[30] The representatives became astonished.

The enemies saw that eight jeweled pots bathed Kṛṣṇa from above, that the *devatās* were worshiping him with hundreds of fragrant flowers and unguents, and that he appeared most splendid with cloth, ornaments, a throne, dazzling white *cāmaras*, an umbrella, and other shining articles. ||13||

The *devatās* in the sky shouted, “Victory” and offered respects. The enemies became frightened and made appropriate noises. ||14||

[31] What more can be said? Afflicted by Kṛṣṇa’s power, they met with Jarāsandha and, seeing no alternative, gave up desire for Rukmiṇī and returned to their kingdoms.

[32] Nanda said, “Then what happened?”

[33] The messengers said, “Satisfying everybody properly, he returned by the road on which he came. He caused rejoicing in Mathurā but looked to Vraja with affection.” ||15||

[34] All with tears asked, “Did he send you two messengers?”

[35] The messengers said, “He said ‘I think that I should send a message. Oh! If this is arranged by fate, what can I say?’ You two should go to Vraja.” ||16||

[36 - 37] Concluding the statements of the messengers, Snigdhakaṇṭha said:

Submitting to your son’s power, Jarāsandha was tied up eighteen times. After that, when several pairs of messengers from Vraja entered Mathurā, suddenly from the west, an array of armies appeared.

[38] That evening the people of Vraja left their homes with the cows and gathered together. They entered a

dense forest in the east amidst high mountains. But Jarāsandha came like the wind and surrounded Mathurā.

[39] Kṛṣṇa and the people of Vraja desired to hear from each other but this was not possible.

[40] Because of their cramped conditions in the mountains with innumerable cows and people, they lamented for news about Kṛṣṇa and thus the chief cowherds gave up eating. One day, when there was an opportunity, the cowherds climbed the highest trees on the peaks of the mountains out of longing, to get news about Kṛṣṇa. They saw two messengers coming quickly with two more messengers. Without asking others, the cowherds thought of informing Nanda, but being far-sighted, they watched from their position. The first two came running as if in fear.

[41] The two spoke with joyful faces. Joyfully, the cowherds took the two messengers and the second pair also to Nanda's assembly. From far off, the two messengers without being asked, joyfully said as previously, "Fine, fine, fine."

[42] Nanda, radiant because of Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma, welcomed the two messengers and spoke to them, "Say what happened in brief."

[43] The messengers said, "Kālayavana and his armies have been defeated miserably. There is nothing to lament. But without news of you, Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma in distress sent us two messengers. O Nanda! Just as you remember your two sons, your two sons remember you." ||17||

[44] Everyone exclaimed with great joy, "Tell it all in detail."

[45] The messengers said, “In the evening we met Kṛṣṇa, the moon of your dynasty, whose fame and well-being are on everyone’s mind and saw that he had no worries. Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma along with Uddhava asked us again and again for news of Vraja. The next morning we saw in the distance that Kālayavana and others had surrounded Mathurā on all sides like waves in the ocean. As we watched, they came closer. It seemed that Jarāsandha was very close. Later we recognized that it was Kālayavana (a *mleccha*). Armies led by Kālayanava, sought out and gathered by Jarāsandha, had assembled.

[46] Nanda said, “It is a most fearful situation if Kālayavana was there. Gargya was mocked by his brother-in-law as a eunuch, and the Yadus openly laughed as well. Gargya became angry and emanated fear. He made a decision and began worshiping Śiva. By Śiva’s blessing, from Gargya, in the womb of the wife of the king of the Yavanas, Kālayavana was born. He was protected by the king of the Yavanas. Since his birth, the Yadus have been afflicted with fear. His name is Kālayavana. Say what happened next.”

[47] The messengers said, “Recognizing him as Kālayavana, Kṛṣṇa reflected, took Balarāma by the hand, and spoke to him privately, ‘It is impossible for the Yadus to fight with him. He is standing at the gate in his armor. Even if they can fight with Kālayavana, Jarāsandha will soon arrive. He will fight with us, enter the city and destroy the houses. We must think of something else. To protect all the houses we must build a huge invincible fort. It is best everyone disappear right now. Going far away will be beneficial for Vraja for wherever we go the enemies will cause disturbance.’”

[48] They continued speaking, “With such a strong desire, the next night Kṛṣṇa went on a trip in his airplane. Near the shore of the ocean he built a city with palaces by his power of knowledge and placed all the people of Mathurā there by the airways. The people who went to sleep in Mathurā woke up in Dvārakā. They wondered, “What is this divine city surrounded by the sea? How did we get here? Kṛṣṇa did not go anywhere in the night!” Having arrived they stayed there. We two wondered about this in Mathurā in the morning. Making friends with a few people, we understood from them where Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma were.”

[49] The people of Vraja said, “O Nanda! We know that you have power. By this power your son has attained that knowledge. Please describe what happened later.”

[50] The messengers said, “Kṛṣṇa then spoke to Balarāma. ‘Stay here for some time and protect the Yadus. I will arrange by intelligence to have the Yavana killed.’ Saying this, he opened the small door of the fort and went out fearlessly alone, as if giving an example of the *śruti* statement *dvaitād bhayam* (Fear arises from duality). [5]

[51] When he went out without weapons, Kālayavana and all others saw him dressed in a yellow cloth and decorated with the finest ornaments. He was the abode of darkness like a rain cloud with lightning. By the quick movements of his arms, or by the power of expanding forms, he appeared to have four arms. His beauty moved their hearts such that they could not ask him anything, what to speak of touch him. Misleading them, Kṛṣṇa approached.

[52] Kālayavana recognized that this was Kṛṣṇa, conforming to the descriptions given by Nārada. But in envy, disregarding that form giving extraordinary happiness, he desired to fight with weaponless Kṛṣṇa by also putting down his weapons. Though Kālayavana desired to fight, Kṛṣṇa did not desire it, and instead insulted him as Kālayavana pursued him, “I do not desire to be touched by a Yavana.” Desiring to touch him, the king of the Yavanas swiftly came in front of him.

[53] Kṛṣṇa ran away and said, “If you touch me you win, and if you do not touch me you lose. That should be our understanding.”

Pursuing Kṛṣṇa who ran away just as Kālayavana thought he had touched him, Kālayavana ran quickly and became weak. Kṛṣṇa laughed and smiled sweetly. ||18||

Three-million Yavanas had gathered in a thick crowd. Their king ran after Kṛṣṇa. But no one could touch Kṛṣṇa. ||19||

[54] Nanda said, “Then what happened?”

[55] The messengers said, “Coming to a mountain west of Dhavala town to the south of Mathurā, Kālayavana began criticizing Kṛṣṇa but Kṛṣṇa was not afraid. Finding a cave, excellent Kṛṣṇa entered it to fulfill his plans. Ignorant Kālayavana followed him and spoke in anger to a tall person sleeping there, whom he thought was Kṛṣṇa. Saying, ‘You are sleeping, lying innocently like some old cooking oil in a pot’, he passionately kicked him. With that kick, Mucukunda immediately burned Kālayavana to ashes with his venomous glance. Kṛṣṇa, eager to see the fun, watched from a hiding place.

[56] Everyone said with excitement, “Then what happened?”

[57] The messengers said, “Your life, Kṛṣṇa, slowly walked forward and accepted Mucukunda’s poisonous glance as a shower of nectar.”

[58] Upananda said, “This is astonishing! This is similar to blind leading the blind. Mucukunda, the form of devotion to the Lord, was sleeping (blind) and Kālayavana (blind) woke him up and was burned to ashes by his deadly glance. The rumor was that this happened by chance. But Kṛṣṇa knew about it, made it happen and witnessed it. Please speak of other stories concerning the nature of Kṛṣṇa, clever at keeping secrets.”

[59] The messengers said, “Let’s not speak of his cleverness. His sweetness controls everyone completely. But describing sweetness in the pastimes is not suitable for you, since it would have the fault of repetition. Masters of Vraja! What more can I have you hear? You are *cātaka* birds for his dark cloud body. You have divine eyes for seeing the wealth of variegated beauty in his limbs. You are the best of *devatās* for tasting all the nectar of his qualities.” ||20||

[60] They said, “Listen to the most affectionate words of ancient Mucukunda directed to Kṛṣṇa:

You wander about with your tender dark-blue lotus feet on the uneven mountain side, on sharp bits of rock with chipped edges, made intolerable by masses of bristling, sharp thorns.” ||21||

[61] Hearing this description, the people of Vraja, overwhelmed with pity, began weeping for some time. While weeping, they said in choked voices, “What happened next?”

[62 - 63] The messengers said, “With arousal of affection, Mucukunda began to speak about himself in order to ask

about Kṛṣṇa's extraordinary qualities. After he finished speaking, Kṛṣṇa with a smile explained his particulars suitably. When both were overwhelmed with affection, Mucukunda became detached from the material world, became attached to Mukunda, and requested to be in Kṛṣṇa's auspicious association. Kṛṣṇa however did not immediately grant his desire, but arranged for it to happen later. Considering the cause, we can think of the saying, "The wise know."[6] Association with the moon of your dynasty is very rare. Though Mucukunda developed peacefulness through his detachment, and saw Kṛṣṇa with pure *bhakti,* he could not even touch him. ||22||

[64] Nanda said, "Then what happened?"

[65] The messengers said:

Having met Kṛṣṇa, he offered respects. Desiring to worship Kṛṣṇa he then performed austerities from which he attained eternal association with Kṛṣṇa.

[66] Just as Kṛṣṇa defeated Kālayavana, Balarāma protected Mathurā.

[67] Just by thinking, Kṛṣṇa brought his chariot and implements in front of him. He then blew his conch, saying, "Death has caught Kālayavana."

[68] When he blew the conch, Balarāma said, "Order us what to do." Blowing his conch and mixing it with Kṛṣṇa's sound, he left the city. When he came out of the city, Kṛṣṇa blew the conch, announcing, "Kill the low barbarians with your plough and pestle."

[69] Then Balarāma shows bliss using his pestle and Kṛṣṇa shows prowess using his sword called Nandaka. We know that three-million *mlecchas* were killed along with their horses. Of the uncountable dead *mlecchas,* the

Yadus only remember the sound of the name *mleccha,* since their language is difficult to understand.

As the earth is covered with *tāla* trees covered with flies, the earth was scattered with their severed heads covered with hair. ||23||

[70] Nanda said, “Then what happened?”

[71] The messengers said, “When Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma arranged for people to throw away the dead bodies wherever they lay and collect the wealth, we begged permission from Uddhava to go to Vraja. After informing Kṛṣṇa through Uddhava, we arrived here at the dwelling of your lotus feet along with two other messengers dispatched by Kṛṣṇa. When they learn of your welfare, quickly dispatch them to Kṛṣṇa, since Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma will be pacified by those messengers.”

[72] After hearing this, Nanda fed the two messengers and satisfied them with cloth and ornaments. Nanda then dispatched them suitably along with the other two messengers.

[73] Nanda, eager for service, sent off the two messengers with messages. Those two and the two sent by Kṛṣṇa, seeing that Mathurā was empty, began lamenting and were returning to Vraja, but on the way, they heard that Jarāsandha pursued Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma and had gone towards Dvārakā.

[74] Kṛṣṇa’s messengers, wanting to learn about this, took the road to Dvārakā. Nanda’s two messengers returned to Vraja to deliver the details of Mathurā and to hear instructions. Arriving there, they described what they saw in Mathurā. Nanda and the others became overwhelmed with grief. There is no necessity of hearing about this.

[75] Nanda also dispatched his two messengers to Dvārakā. Those two and the other two did not return for many days because of the distance and obstacles. When many days had passed, two happy persons riding on swift horses arrived. They offered respects to Nanda's lotus feet and spoke pleasant words: "Most auspicious and powerful Kṛṣṇa, having conquered the enemies, offers respects at your feet and gives this information."

[76] On hearing this, with hairs standing on end, all said, "What is next, what is next?"

[77] The two messengers said:

Please understand this message: "We have auspiciously entered a fortress called Dvārakā, impassable to enemies. No fear can be seen here either presently or in the future. But your happiness will make us happy. Informing you, we have become happy."

[78] Particularly, Kṛṣṇa said in a choked voice, "Oh! For me, your son, you underwent many difficulties created by demons like Pūtanā while living in Gokula, and in Mathurā beginning with Jarāsandha till Kālayavana's attack. For this reason I have come to Dvārakā to spend some time. Know that I will quickly come from Dvārakā to Vraja." ||24||

[79] Hearing that news completely, Nanda said, "It is fortunate that they have taken shelter of such a fortress, for Mathurā is dangerous like Gokula. Let that be. I will ask about the details later. Now arrange for feeding the messengers."

[80] After they ate, sitting with everyone and hearing about Kṛṣṇa eagerly, Nanda inquired from the two messengers, "How did Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma come back to Dvārakā?"

[81] The messengers said:

We are servants of Uddhava. According to the orders of our shelter Kṛṣṇa and the instructions of Uddhava, we will give you the news. The two boys did not want the wealth of the *mlecchas* but wanted to protect it as the king's property, but when they saw Jarāsandha again coming, desiring to give up that wealth, the two began to flee for fun. When they did so, Jarāsandha came close to them. When the unsteady fellow arrived close by, Kṛṣṇa spoke to him.

"We captured you many times and let you go. We cannot do that again out of embarrassment to you. Stay far away if you want to kill us, O Jarāsandha! Therefore we have fled today. If you have the power to capture us, then you have conquered us. Otherwise we win." ||25||

[82] In this statement, the words *drava* (running), *keli* (playing) and *parihāsa* (joking) all have the same meaning. Giving up their own troops who were following behind them to protect them, Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma went amidst the enemy troops. With those troops behind, Jarāsandha followed Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma. Not only that, but twenty-three *akṣauhiṇīs* with chariots followed.

Jarāsandha, whom Kṛṣṇa defeated by words, ran after Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma but could not catch up with them. ||26||

When Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma went speedily amongst the enemy troops, none of the troops could touch them, as they were like lightning in speed and strength. ||27||

Step-by-step Jarāsandha chased them, but the two ran so fast that he was unable to catch them in ten-million *kalpas.* ||28||

Though the *akṣauhiṇīs* became tired, Jarāsandha did not. Though Jarāsandha became tired, Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma did not. ||29||

They laughed and ran. Jarāsandha ran and howled. Their joy produced strength. His flaming rage produced disappointment. ||30||

As they ran, their faced blossomed. The *devatās* laughed on seeing Jarāsandha tire as he tried to grab them. ||31||

Unable to defeat the two who ran with playful gait, Jarāsandha cursed his life. ||32||

They ran five-hundred *krośas* and climbed a mountain eleven-*yojanas* high, which Jarāsandha could not climb. ||33||

Wanting to injure them by fire, which they had swallowed in Vraja, Jarāsandha gathered fuel and burned the mountain called Pravarṣaṇa (always raining). ||34||

He said rightly that what happened to them could not be known. The two jumped from the mountain and arrived at Dvārakā. ||35||

Though it is possible for birds to jump in that manner, the two could do so while others could not. ||36||

Though they fell a long distance, they experienced no fatigue since people saw them laughing at the gate of Dvārakā. ||37||

When they approached the citizens, they were calm, with hair and cloth bound up, looking beautiful with perspiration on their faces. ||38||

[83] Nanda said, “So Jarāsandha and other sinful wretches were destroyed?”

[84] The messengers said:

Jarāsandha and his cohorts were not only blind in sight but also in intelligence for they considered Kṛṣṇa to be dead. ||39||

Thinking Kṛṣṇa was dead they were happy. When messengers informed them that Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma were unharmed, they had to suffer because of their sins. ||40||

[85] Jarāsandha and his friends were blind.

Though Kālayavana's abundant treasures remained there, a few of his friends moved about like thirsty persons in the desert and then returned to their houses with difficulty. ||41||

[86] What more can be said? Jarāsandha's men did not seek the *mleccha's* wealth. It is said that the wealth was eventually taken to Dvārakā and used to beautify the outer walls.

[87] Hearing this, everyone laughed with tears and sighs of relief. Nanda then said, "Oh! How could the two boys' tender feet tread on the rough path?"

[88] The messengers said, "Barely touching the earth, they moved in the air." ||42||

[89] After speaking, the messengers, receiving the blessings of the assembly, departed for Dvārakā. At the time of their leaving, Nanda gave a letter, filled with affectionate words from all the Vraja people.

"O moon of Gokula! We are tolerating the pain of separation from you. Do not worry, for we have become strong because of your happy life in the fortress inaccessible to enemies." ||43||

[90] Snigdhakaṇṭha concluded. "Though Kṛṣṇa excitedly engaged in battles, he quickly defeated the enemies.

Otherwise how could he be sitting on your lap so quickly? What of his ascending Pravarṣaṇa Mountain? What of his staying in Dvārakā? What of our appearance here? We see him seated on the lap of Nanda now!” ||44 - 45||

[91] Satisfying Nanda and the others, the two reciters, happy with the mercy of the assembly, narrated in this manner.

[92] The bards of Vraja began to praise Kṛṣṇa directly:

You were enthroned in the assembly among kings in the city of Bhīṣmaka. You were worshiped by the *devatās.* But you were not proud. ||46.a||

You increased the satisfaction of the people of Mathurā. You killed infamous infidels!

You were surrounded by Kālayavana. You skillfully arranged for his death. ||46.b||

You went alone out of the city for pastimes. You killed the rascals in play. The enemy followed but could not catch you. You went out of the fort all alone. You are most skillful at arranging comical pastimes. ||46.c||

You went to Mucukunda’s resting place. You showed a face trembling in fear. You entered the mountain cave and saw the best of men sleeping. ||46.d||

Kālayavana followed you. You became absorbed in hiding yourself. You showed mercy to Mucukunda who was there. You shone like the sun in the darkness. ||46.e||

You cut down Kālayavana by the weapon eyes of Mucukunda. You satisfied his heart. You were merciful in fulfilling the devotee’s desire. ||46.f||

You killed many millions of Yavanas and collected their wealth in the battle. You were followed by Jarāsandha.

You rejected the abundant wealth of the *mlecchas.* ||46.g||

You decided to lead him away as previously. You went away to defeat Jarāsandha.

You climbed to the top of Pravarṣaṇa Mountain. You jumped and defeated the forest fire. ||46.h||

You made a palace as the shelter for the Yadus in the ocean. All the worlds worship you. Now you are residing in Vraja. Victory to the son of Nanda! ||46.i||

[93] Absorbed in the speaking, the assembly forgot that Kṛṣṇa was present, like a *cintāmaṇi* gem around their necks. The bards then made the anxious people of Vraja realize Kṛṣṇa directly as Snigdhakaṇṭha did. In this way they acted beneficially for the people of Vraja. Nanda bid them farewell, and the assembly members departed for their houses.

[94] Commencing recitation in the assembly of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa in the evening, Snigdhakaṇṭha spoke. When Uddhava consoled all the people of Vraja, encouraged their faith that he would return quickly, and then left for Mathurā, direct manifestation of Kṛṣṇa protected them, sometimes in awaking or sleeping state, and sometimes when alone. When meeting in large groups, they became externally conscious and thought about his being in Mathurā. Though this was their normal mood, there was some exception. When the *gopīs* became absorbed in him, that vision became long-lasting and firm.

[95] They decided, “When Kṛṣṇa directly appears I will keep him here by surrounding him with my creeper-like arms.” Then they lost awareness because of the great bliss of his association. Then he would suddenly disappear and their desires could not be fulfilled. They

then thought of becoming absorbed in messages from Mathurā. They constantly took shelter of the feet of Yaśodā. Until their dear Kṛṣṇa returned, the *gopīs* used these two methods: the *sphūrti* of Kṛṣṇa and the shelter of Yaśodā's feet. But by secret letters Uddhava sowed the instructions of Kṛṣṇa in the field of Vraja as he had done previously.

[96] Kṛṣṇa's appearance and disappearance:

Sometimes the *gopīs* manifested blossoming bodies and sometimes great radiance. Sometimes their bodies became thin and many times they were like dying lamps. When a lamp receives oil it shines brightly and without oil it dims. When the *gopīs* attained a manifestation of his affection they shone brightly and without that manifestation they were devoid of beauty. ||47||

The *sakhīs* of Rādhā followed the happiness and distress of Rādhā's *prema* (in presence or absence of Kṛṣṇa) which like the sun, was pleasant in the winter and painful in the summer. ||48||

[97] When Kṛṣṇa with great desire sent the two messengers who were dedicated to him, he first made an excellent letter steeped with secret hints. Saying, "Deliver this to Subala's hands", he dispatched the messengers. They delivered it to Subala and Subala gave it to the *gopīs.*

"Though I have gone far away, you should know that I am close. Mathurā obstructs my friends from coming to you and obstructs my enemies from attacking you." ||49||

[98] The *gopīs* then sent Subala to deliver a letter they personally wrote, to Uddhava's hand.

[99] “Hearing that Jarāsandha pursued you and that you went on a difficult path up a mountain, how can the women of Vraja, who languish on thinking of the pain to your feet when you walked in Vṛndāvana, which is devoid of thorns and spiked plants, maintain their lives?” ||50||

[100] Snigdhakaṇṭha concluded: “Kṛṣṇa lamented on seeing the letter you wrote. Let that be. He is embracing you now in this place. But it is not possible to stop the tears. It is not possible to see the topics that have been heard. But look. The separation felt by Rādhā manifests before your eyes. If this happens while Kṛṣṇa is present, will this not happen when he is absent?” ||51 - 52||

[101] When Rādhā directly realized Kṛṣṇa’s presence and became absorbed in great bliss, and when the two reciters went to their lodging, all returned to their houses. With affection Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa engaged in their pastimes in their attractive house.

Chapter Fifteen

Marriage of Balarāma

[1] In the morning recitation on another topic, in the assembly of Nanda made glorious by Kṛṣṇa, Madhukaṇṭha spoke.

When the two messengers sent by Kṛṣṇa and the two sent by Nanda gathered information from Dvārakā and other places for pacifying the people of Vraja and returned quickly, Nanda began to consult others: “Now my son is far away. How will we follow the news without obstruction?”

[2] Upananda said, “You will have set aside many pairs of messengers. And then constantly a pair will arrive.”

[3] Nanda said, “Assign hundreds of pairs of messengers along with the first ones.”

[4] Among them, one pair, on Nanda’s order, traveling a hundred-and-twenty *krośas* in a day and night, went to Dvārakā in five days. They gave all the news of Vraja to Kṛṣṇa through Uddhava, who understood that Nanda had engaged hundreds of messengers.

[5] Kṛṣṇa said, “Even employing so many messengers, it will not be without obstacles. I will give the messengers two-hundred horses which can travel for a hundred *yojanas*. Then they can come and go constantly.”

[6] Taking the news from Dvārakā, they mounted horses and came to the assembly of Nanda. First informing the assembly that Kṛṣṇa was fine, they then told the news:

[7] Though Mathurā was close we could not produce great happiness since there was always disturbance in Mathurā. The height of joy in Dvārakā widens the eyes for it is far from any disturbance and its happiness cannot be found anywhere in the universe.

Nanda! In Dvārakā, the sea surrounds the city in the form of canals. All around are walls whose height makes the eyes of warriors flee. Each item must be seen individually. There, fear becomes afraid and flees. It possesses an abundance of happiness for the heart. ||1||

This heavenly city produces unprecedented bliss for the ears, eyes and heart with many houses—abodes of profuse, sweet beauty, since they are made of gold, pearls, sapphires, emeralds, diamonds, cat’s eye, coral, sunstones, moonstones and rubies. ||2||

There are heavenly trees with shining limbs and all the heavenly gems. It surpasses Svarga. The *devatās* are also amazed by the beauty. We previously saw the Yadus many times. But seeing them now, they cannot be recognized because of their unprecedented beauty. ||3||

The Sudharmā (best *dharma*) hall and the Nandana (bliss) forest of heaven were not so successful previously. Kṛṣṇa has made their names successful. ||4||

[8] Moreover the most fortunate citizens think they have attained good fortune by seeing the powers produced by Kṛṣṇa. In perfect Dvārakā, palaces seem imperfect.

There are turrets with flags, palaces, pillars, brick walls, courtyards and yards, glowing with gems. If the great

palace is decorated with Kṛṣṇa, it will seek out marriageable Lakṣmīs. ||5||

[9] When we were gazing at the beauty of the city, Kṛṣṇa, while laughing, spoke, “What are you looking at? In Vraja that special grandeur also exists since you saw that place with pleasure when I came from Varuṇa’s abode and you will see it in the future after I have killed the tormenters of devotees.”

[10] Nanda said, “Why have you two been so delayed?”

[11] The two said, “There was a great festival.”

[12] Nanda said, “Tell us about it.”

[13 - 14] They said:

It was amazing. Listen attentively.

When we two were filled with love and our hearts were overflowing with the nectar of seeing Kṛṣṇa, some caretaker of the groves came and said in astonishment, “O lord! A man as tall as a *tāla* tree has come with a similar woman. For some moments he resided there, decorating the forest with his effulgence, destroying all judgment with his uniqueness. He says he wants to meet you. Therefore I have come. People were greatly frightened. After some time, unlimited people like me, overcoming our fear and reservations, made the forest into a crowded city in order to look at him.”

[15] Eager to see him, Kṛṣṇa went in a palanquin and we two followed behind. We saw that all the people were like new babies in front of the two giants. Seeing them we thought, “Oh! How many days it must have taken them to grow to that size!”

[16] The people of Vraja said, “Then what happened?”

[17] The messengers said, “Seeing Kṛṣṇa, he fell on the ground to offer respects with great joy. Kṛṣṇa raised him up with his arms, offered respects with his head and sat him down in front of him with joy. The very shy woman, in order to hide herself, cast her glance behind him.”

[18] The people of Vraja said, “Then what happened?”

[19 - 20] The messengers said:

Kṛṣṇa asked about them, and the huge person rumbled like a cloud in speaking. At that, the peacocks began auspiciously crying out of great joy. He said, “I am Revata, also known as Kakudmi. Having heard of the many ancient kings, you must have heard of me. With my youthful body I went past Svarga up to Brahmaloka. I will not recount how we have ancient bodies but appear young. But I request with folded hands that you please hear my words like the Vedas. Seeing my daughter’s extraordinary qualities and not seeing a suitable groom, I went to Brahmā to arrange a suitable person. Desiring to see him, I brought her as well. Brahmā however was looking at a dance performance. Later, smiling at me, also absorbed in the dancing, he said, ‘What is a short time here is a *kalp*a on earth. Thus all those you know have been taken away by time. No one is suitable as a husband for your pure daughter with remarkable qualities and long life. But I realize this: Balarāma, Kṛṣṇa’s elder brother, will make her happy.’

[21] Then I asked, ‘Her form should be similar to the present form of humans. She is very tall. How can she be his wife?’

[22] Brahmā said, ‘The older brother of Kṛṣṇa, who straightened out Kubjā, can do this. He who is her protector will do the best for her.’ ||6||

[23] I cannot describe all of your qualities that I heard from Brahmā's mouth. Even Ananta cannot do so. Since you are the lord, do as you wish."

[24] Nanda said, "Then what happened?"

[25] The messengers said, "The moon of your dynasty, with a slight smile, remained silent and thought: it is suitable for the ornament of the Yadu dynasty, Balarāma, to marry a *kṣatriya's* daughter. There is no speculation with obstacles whether he is a cowherd or *kṣatriya,* as in my case. Because it is a fault to reject a good opportunity, I should act so that Balarāma will accept. Accepting this proposal, going to the city, we will deliberate."

[26] Nanda said, "Then what happened?"

[27] The messengers said, "Accepting his proposal, he welcomed Revata in the city and after consulting with Vasudeva and others, he got Balarāma to agree to their decision. Balarāma then took his plough in the night and while she was sleeping, altered her limbs, making her happy. Kṛṣṇa then performed their marriage."

[28] What more can be said? When all began making gestures in astonishment, the messengers again spoke, "Previously Balarāma, following Kṛṣṇa's example, was not inclined to get married. But fearing the fault of going against the Lord's desire and in deference to public opinion, he accepted marriage."

[29] Nanda said, "By good fortune this has happened. But I do not know what will happen to the youngest son."

[30] Everyone said, "The youngest, endowed with all qualities, will do as he pleases with some shyness."

[31] Nanda asked with a deep sigh (wondering whether he would marry a cowherd or *kṣatriya*), “When you left, did my son give a letter?”

[32] They said, “Oh yes, here is the letter:

In order to bind me up, my friends like Parjanya made a forest called Vṛndāvana, a river called Kālindī and placed cows there. By that bondage, my heart, full of compassion, becomes filled completely with those perfect objects which have become most dear because of you. ||7||

As long as an ungrateful person like me does not return to live in Vraja, my most affectionate father should protect the respected cows with best qualities headed by Haṃsī, Sunandā, Surabhi and Gaṅgā who have such affection for me, taking me as their very life.” ||8||

[33] Hearing this, with tears in their eyes, the people of Vraja remained silent for some moments and then spoke:

“We do not mind the suffering we experience in Kṛṣṇa’s absence. We feel pain when he suffers because of our suffering.” ||9||

[34] Nanda then began preparing a letter in response:

For our sake, you have spent much time protecting the Yadus with difficulty and have given up cherished things and are known as a Yadu. It is now difficult for us to see your cherished cows. I have no attachment to do this myself and thus I, your father, am ashamed. ||10||

[35] Afraid of the confusion that the next topic (marriage to Rukmiṇī) would create, Madhukaṇṭha quickly concluded:

“O Nanda! See Haṃsī, Sunandā, and Gaṅgā! Observant people are happy in seeing that you are caring for the

cows. Let that be. O lord of the cowherds! Look! Your son Kṛṣṇa is nourishing your lap and is expert at nourishing all the people of Vraja completely.” ||11||

[36] Giving joy to all and being satisfied by them, Madhukaṇṭha in the evening went before Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa and spoke.

At that time, your lover sent you a letter as follows:

I have watered heaps of spring flowers by the thousands for making bowers. May my desires be fulfilled by making these dear women half of my body by means of acceptable *dharma*! ||12||

[37] They replied with this letter:

We desired to water all the *mādhavī* creepers that you sprouted for making bowers. Though sprinkled with cool water, the plants dried up because of the hot water of our tears. ||13||

[38] Madhukaṇṭha concluded, “By instructing them to care for the bowers, Kṛṣṇa indicated he would soon return. O Rādhā! Making that example of the bower and then fulfilling it, he now plays with you.” ||14||

[39] Giving them both happiness, and taking their permission, the two reciters along with all others left. Should the happiness of the two lovers in the house of pastimes be described by speaking?

Chapter Sixteen

Rukmiṇī’s Marriage

[1] After the evening session, Snigdhakaṇṭha began speaking (the next morning) another topic in Nanda’s assembly, lit by the smile from Kṛṣṇa’s moon-like face.

[2] When the many messengers were going and coming in this way, two other messengers arrived. As in previous cases, they announced the good condition and gave information. There was astonishing news from the most auspicious city called Vanamālī.

[3] Nanda said, “O messengers! Please describe this completely.”

[4] They said:

When some days had passed in complete happiness, one day while your son was sitting somewhat indifferently on a cot in a room made of jewels with a vacant mind, a *brāhmaṇa* who acted as if he had been cheated by evil men quickly approached. Kṛṣṇa had great faith in the person who had arrived because he was a *brāhmaṇa,* and according to proper conduct offered him respects, worshiped him by washing his feet and offering other services, fed him tasty food, gave him a bed, and held his feet for service. After inquiring about his well-being he asked why he had come.

[5] Being shy, the *brāhmaṇa* was silent for some moments and then spoke, “There is a king named Bhīṣmaka living in Kuṇḍina in Vidarbha state. He is the

abode of great fame. You know him. He is famous for being born in a famous dynasty. He has some demonic sons like Rukmī and a daughter named Rukmiṇī. Friends who know the king's heart were thinking of offering her to you. But Rukmī has deceived them and has attempted to give her to Śiśupāla. This praiseworthy daughter, hearing of your qualities and confirming them through the scriptures, desires to accept you as her husband according to her impressions. What is to be said about her desire to accept you? She has already accepted you in her mind. Having done that, it is continually painful for her to see other marriage arrangements. Giving up shyness, she has sent me to you. She says this:

"One should not be ashamed for a righteous cause. Shame because of sin or death is low. Those women are fortunate who worship Kṛṣṇa because of attraction, giving up local custom and *dharma*." ||1||

[6] Kṛṣṇa began to think, "It is true. She has no alternative. Nārada, who gives happiness to all, has already said that she is attracted only to me. Let us leave that news of her attraction for now. Fixed in the instructions from saints like Nārada, she cannot give up the scriptural principle of being fully dedicated to me. She can even give up her body. I think she cannot reveal her desires for me to her parents unless she knows my agreement to marry her. If she knows I accept her, she will live. If she understands I will not accept her, then she will give up her life. This constant nature of mine manifests at all times: when someone shows *anurāga* for me, I cannot reject them. Because of the extraordinary emotions in my heart caused by the wealth of *prema* in Vraja I have no inclination for her. But now she is

attempting service with great pain. My heart does not know what to do. I must again ask for news.”

[7] He asked, “What are the details of what she wants?”

[8] The *brāhmaṇa* said, “There is nothing. But she shyly gave me this letter. “

[9] Kṛṣṇa said, “Please read it.”

[10] The *brāhmaṇa* spoke in a choked voice:

O Kṛṣṇa, most beautiful in the universe! Your famous qualities have entered my heart through my ears. What to speak of hearing about you, on seeing your form you have entered my heart! ||2||

O lotus-eyed Kṛṣṇa! My mind becomes absorbed in those qualities. Those qualities combine and remain in my mind, which thinks of you as the only goal. By those qualities, my heart gives up all shyness and constantly follows you. ||3||

O Lord! Let these qualities which destroy all suffering and your form which bestows all results not be given to me though I desire them! But I do not want to see other women in such a position. ||4||

What intelligent women, with good family and qualities, would not worship you? For there is no one equal to you in qualities and you attract the minds of all people in the three worlds. ||5||

Most worshipable Kṛṣṇa! Because you attract all, I have given up shyness. I immediately accept you as my husband. Śiśupāla cannot touch this body which has been offered to you. O lion among men! Is the lioness’s body fit for the jackal? ||6||

I have worshiped the Lord since childhood by various types of charity to serve you. If this is not accomplished

or there is obstacle in my worship, let my body perish. But no one else should touch my body. ||7||

O Kṛṣṇa! The day after tomorrow I am to be married. Come to the marriage secretly tomorrow, surrounded by soldiers. Defeating Śiśupāla and others, take me away when I go out to worship Devī according to the custom. ||8||

If the Lord, the dust from whose lotus feet takes away all suffering, is not pleased, let me have the benediction of worshiping him and giving up my life for thousands of births! ||9||

[11] The people of Vraja said, “Ah! This young girl has fixed her mature intelligence on the most auspicious object. She has made such vow in the end.”

[12] Some women said, “How could she be a young girl? She was intelligent, for in fear she sent the messenger.”

[13] Others said, “Those of *kṣatriya* birth have no fear in their minds but they teach others by being fixed in *dharma*. Tell the rest of the story.”

[14] The messengers said:

Understanding her deep attachment, Kṛṣṇa again thought: “What should I do now, since I must prevent her from giving up her body? And this marriage will be an obstacle in going to Gokula. How should I marry her?”

[15] He again considered, “Anyway, I should kidnap her and later think about what to do.”

[16] Thinking in this way he said to the *brāhmaṇa:*

O best of *brāhmaṇas*! Please listen with attention. Since I heard from Nārada that she is attracted to me, my mind has been thinking of her constantly.

It is well known that the devotees follow after the qualities of the *devatā* they worship. But I also follow after the qualities of my devotees, just as a crystal mountain adopts the qualities of the object next to it. ||10||

[17] Therefore she must be delivered. Later I will consider what to do.

[18] Thinking in this way, with anxious heart he mounted his chariot with the *brāhmaṇa.* Understanding the time of the wedding, he arrived in one night in Kuṇḍina town, in the middle of Vidarbha. He decided that he should not take permission from anyone. He did not even take Balarāma because of fear and shame. Going in this way he arrived in the evening.

[19] Arriving at Kuṇḍina, he saw the joyful marriage arranged by the king according to the wishes of his son. He then understood that Śiśupāla had arrived expecting to be the groom. He also saw the great respect Bhīṣmaka gave to the groom as appropriate to the occasion, and saw Jarāsandha and others who had assembled to fix the proposal.

[20] Nanda in fear asked, “How did my son remain so close to them while being alone?”

[21] The messengers said, “O Nanda! You certainly know your son’s power which considers millions of enemies to be insignificant. If a lion is alone in an elephant herd, will the lion be afraid?” ||11||

[22 - 23] Nanda said, “Did anyone follow Kṛṣṇa? No one should follow him? Even Balarāma did not follow him? How could Balarāma also born in the milk ocean of Vraja give up affection for him? Did not the people of Dvārakā have affection for him as a relative?”

The two messengers said, “Only Balarāma followed. Hearing that his brother had arrived at Kuṇḍina to steal the bride and that the enemies were ready to prevent any interruption to the marriage, Balarāma was overcome with affection from being born in the ocean of affection in Vraja. Alarmed, we went to Kuṇḍina with an array of troops.” ||12||

[24] All then thought of the difference between Balarāma and the Yadus. They said, “*Prema* that appears from birth is *svabhāva-siddha* (according to the very nature of a person). *Prema* which arises incidentally is conditional. How can that artificial *prema* be compared with natural *prema*?” ||13||

[25] Nanda said, “Then what happened?”

[26] The messengers said, “When he arrived Kṛṣṇa was embarrassed. Balarāma became red like the rising moon because of anger and did not speak to Kṛṣṇa, thinking him to be like a thief. He remained there, surrounding him with the troops.”

[27] Nanda said in joy, “Where did the *brāhmaṇa* go? Afflicted by fear that her love for Kṛṣṇa would be destroyed, wondering where he was, what did Rukmiṇī think?”

[28] The messengers said, “Understanding that any requests made at night would be useless, the *brāhmaṇa* stayed awake all night thinking of auspicious subjects. Rukmiṇī was thinking that the *brāhmaṇa* would come in the evening. Thinking her aspirations were devastated, she became unsteady. The opportunity at the marriage, which she had narrated to him in the letter, did not materialize. ‘I cannot waste time’, she thought. She thought of looking at the road, but could not do so. With

vacant mind, she bowed her head. Controlling herself by keeping her mouth firmly closed, she closed her tearful eyes. Some time passed. She was unable to tolerate the *brāhmaṇa* not returning, but her left eye, arm and foot began trembling as an auspicious sign. With those symptoms, her mind became alert and she opened her eyes. Opening her eyes she saw the *brāhmaṇa* in front of her. Seeing him, her mind became agitated with doubt whether Kṛṣṇa had come. Then she saw the joy on his face. Her mind and eyes became joyful. Becoming happy, she became cool.

By closeness to the *brāhmaṇa* who was fragrant with the aroma of Kṛṣṇa, Rukmiṇī became fragrant. She experienced such strong joy within that her hairs stood on end. ||14||

[29] The messengers continued: “She inquired from the *brāhmaṇa* in private. Asked, he explained clearly that Kṛṣṇa had accepted her proposal and he had come with him on the chariot by a pleasant route. But all the articles worthy of praise that she had arranged were not suitable to give the *brāhmaṇa.* In offering her head to him when she bowed down, she made him most exalted. Rukmiṇī’s moon-like body, lit by the *cakra* of Kṛṣṇa’s acceptance words, became free from Śiśupāla, who was like Rāhu on the seventh lunar day.” ||15||

[30] Nanda said, “How did Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma fool the others there, and how did the king treat them?”

[31] The messengers said, “They pretended that they had come to see the elaborate marriage celebration. Hearing that they had agreed to come to his daughter’s marriage, in joy the king worshiped them elaborately as suitable to guests.”

[32] Nanda said, “Since he treated them only like guests with some indifference, I think that all the inhabitants of the city must have been indifferent to them.”

[33] The messengers said, “No, no. The king could not show inclination to them because of his suffering condition, caused by his evil son’s advice. All others were unhappy with this situation. All the people gathered and drank through their eyes, like folded hands, the streams of sweetness form Kṛṣṇa’s blue lotus face, spreading constant, unlimited happiness. They said ‘Rukmiṇī is suitable to be Kṛṣṇa’s wife, and Kṛṣṇa is suitable to be her husband in all ways.’ They said this using the word “certainly” at every instance. Moreover they said, ‘Because of past, present and future pious acts we do not desire our own happiness. But we make this joyful prayer. O Lord of all results for all living beings! Let strong, lotus-eyed Kṛṣṇa accept the lotus hand of Rukmiṇī by righteous or unrighteous means!’” ||16 - 17||

[34] Nanda and the people said in bliss, “Then what happened?”

[35] The messengers said:

After bathing in the morning and putting on her clothing, with joyful mind, as if getting permission to go to Dvārakā, Rukmiṇī then became eager to go to the Durgā temple according to the instructions of her parents, after she offered them respects, surrounded by friends, her brother’s wives, mothers-in-law, wives of the family priests, servants, eunuchs, and groups of foot soldiers with swords and armor. Horsemen armed with the best weapons, chief ministers on all-seeing elephants, processions of chariots, musicians carrying instruments, skillful dancers*, sūtas, māgadhas* and *vandis*

distinguished by different colored costumes, and finally, the blissful common people watched the continuous spectacle. Since she held Kṛṣṇa in her heart, no one could impede her. Emerging from the palace guarded by guards, she went through the city according to Vedic rules and arrived at the *dharmic* Durgā temple. Wishing that Kṛṣṇa would destroy the enemies, she walked slowly to the temple.

[36] Rukmiṇī worshiped Durgā according to the proper method and, holding her *prasāda* (mercy) in her body and mind, left the sanctum. Taking the hand of her friend in her hand which had the beauty of Durgā's jeweled hand position (*mudrā*), she went outside. Yogamāyā made Rukmiṇī, with teeth like *kunda* flowers, into two forms. The opposers of Kṛṣṇa saw a material form. The devotees saw her as Kṛṣṇa's wife. The opposers of Kṛṣṇa became bewildered by *māyā* and the devotees of Kṛṣṇa became joyful with devotion to him. While this occurred, Kṛṣṇa remained seated in his chariot, higher than all the rest. The bride and groom gazed at each other as if eternally related, devoid of the glance of even the best of the public.

[37] After they glanced at each other again, Rukmiṇī deliberately delayed in order to climb into the chariot and glanced at him with the edge of her eye. Kṛṣṇa positioned on his swift chariot, then took her up. Persons at a distance thought that Garuḍa on his flag had quickly taken her off to Dvārakā. ||18||

[38] He took her and left. When he took her away, the unlimited people who had been bewildered by *māyā* such as Jarāsandha came back to consciousness, awakened by the sound of Kṛṣṇa's chariot. They could not understand

when Kṛṣṇa had come, when he left and where he went. ||19||

[39] After considering, they began to search. Accompanied by the harsh, terrifying sound caused by the thumping of drums, the neighing of horses, the trumpeting of elephants and the rattling of chariots, the best of soldiers began searching, following the path of the kidnapper of the king's daughter, which was strewn with the bodies of all the enemies cut down by his chariot. Their bodies torn, they became filled with affliction. ||20||

Though the armies came in front of Kṛṣṇa, one cannot describe them because jackals only come in front of a lion out of insanity. ||21||

Though Rukmiṇī's heart was shy from the first meeting, because of her good upbringing she embraced Kṛṣṇa' face with her eyes, since she was fearful of the enemy's strength. ||22||

"Though she knows my power, she is afraid because of her nature as a young girl." Kṛṣṇa calmed her quickly by his words possessing increasing mercy. ||23||

It is true that the enemy approached the Yadus and fired arrows at them. But they were like a mass of clouds in a strong gale. ||24||

The Yadus clearly saw the enemies with their quivers behind. Amazingly, the enemy did not know the position of the Yadus' limbs with their weapons. ||25||

The enemy had most valuable swords but they were like treasures locked in a miser's storehouse. ||26||

The enemy did not lament when countless foot soldiers, horses, chariots and elephants fell in the battle. Because

their bodies remained alive, they felt unequaled happiness. ||27||

The piles of bodies of the terrified enemies run over by Kṛṣṇa's fast chariot were like steps to Svarga. ||28||

Some, seeing the bodies with severed heads, fled far away in fear, holding their heads with their hands, thinking that their own heads may have been severed. ||29||

They consoled Śiśupāla whose wife had been stolen, gave up enthusiasm for fighting through the excuse that victory and defeat depend only on *karma*, and then left. ||30||

"I was defeated by Kṛṣṇa seventeen times and I conquered him once. See how I remain calm." Jarāsandha's words did not make anyone laugh. ||31||

"I was defeated the seventeenth time, but I defeated him the eighteenth time." Jarāsandha was in this way mistaken about his victory. ||32||

[40] Though Rukmī had been defeated with others like a *tāla* tree burned by a strong lightning bolt, he promised in front of the inauspicious rascals that if he did not defeat Kṛṣṇa and Rukmiṇī he would not return.

[41] We derive some happiness from their words. They say that your son, whom Vasudeva established as his son, is a cowherd. They do not deny it. Kṛṣṇa was satisfied with that.[7]

[42] Nanda said, "Then what happened?"

[43] The messengers said, "Rukmī was so thoughtless. But see the cowardly state of the others, since they vowed to help but fled without a show of strength,

because they had hearts of frightened deer, not hearts dedicated to the Lord.”

[44] Nanda said, “Then what happened?”

[45] The messengers said:

Rukmī lamented. Giving up those who lamented their loss, he took only his own *akṣauhiṇīs* and went to battle, but, looking behind, he found he was his only helper. Since he could not depend on only himself, he thought and concluded he could only talk to Kṛṣṇa. From far off, behind Kṛṣṇa, he called “Stop, stop.” But Kṛṣṇa continued to move, not hearing him because of the sound of his chariot swallowed the sound of Rukmī’s chariot. When he heard the sound of his chariot, he stopped. Rukmī began firing abuse from his mouth and arrows from his bow. Kṛṣṇa deflected all the arrows of abuse by his smile and deflected Rukmī’s fury by his armor made of Yogamāyā.

Kṛṣṇa’s golden arrows with feathered ends, increasing in brilliance by the competition with Rukmī, simultaneously broke Rukmī’s bow and flag staff. The arrows immediately demolished the charioteer, Rukmī’s limbs, and his four horses at the same time. Rukmī watched as this happened. With difficulty, he took another bow. He released more arrows, but the same thing happened. Depressed and lamenting, Rukmī then gathered his iron club, spears, trident, shield, armor, sword and lance to make himself invincible against the enemy. His chariot broke and he alighted from it.

[46] Quickly making Rukmī devoid of his chariot, Kṛṣṇa on his chariot approached him with great speed like Śiva. ||33||

[47] When Rukmī took up his golden sword and colorful shield, in order to stop Kṛṣṇa's advance, Kṛṣṇa pulverized them but not completely. Kṛṣṇa wanted to break his sword and shield, deflate his joy and cut him with his knife. But he did not kill him.

[48] Nanda said, "Then what happened?"

[49] The messengers said, "Rukmiṇī then showed her womanly nature. Giving up shyness, she protected her brother, trying to help him, out of pity. Rather than kill him because of audacity, Kṛṣṇa took the opportunity to have some fun which would inflict great pain on him."

[50] Everyone said, "Tell us what happened next."

[51 - 52] The messengers said, "So that the snake with deflated pride could not run away, expert, powerful Kṛṣṇa tied up the deceitful man with a torn piece of cloth like Bali so he could not get loose, as if ready to kill him. A shadow of mercy appeared in Kṛṣṇa's mind because of Rukmiṇī's pleas. Kṛṣṇa then disfigured him by cutting the tough forest of hair on his head with a quick movement of his sword, making zigzag patterns left and right as if lice were making new paths."

[53] When the Vraja assembly laughed at this description, the messengers spoke again:

"Please listen. Balarāma felt pain for Rukmī like someone who wipes a person with cloth when that person breaks his nose. While Kṛṣṇa fought with Rukmī, Balarāma and other attendees of the wedding routed the opposing troops who caused a disturbing battle. When Kṛṣṇa tied up Rukmī, Balarāma was present. Seeing him bound by Kṛṣṇa like someone to be killed, Balarāma became touched with compassion, and, taking the bonds, released them and scolded Kṛṣṇa with many words. He

brought Rukmiṇī, back to a normal state by giving instructions since she was trembling because of Rukmī's plight:

asādhv idaṃ tvayā kṛṣṇa kṛtam asmaj-jugupsitam |
vapanaṃ śmaśru-keśānāṃ vairūpyaṃ suhṛdo vadhaḥ ||
maivāsmān sādhvy asūyethā bhrātur vairūpya-cintayā |
sukha-duḥkha-do na cānyo 'sti yataḥ sva-kṛta-bhuk pumān ||
bandhur vadho-'rha-doṣo 'pi na bandhor vadham arhati |
tyājyaḥ svenaiva doṣeṇa hataḥ kiṃ hanyate punaḥ ||
kṣatriyāṇām ayaṃ dharmaḥ prajāpati-vinirmitaḥ |
bhrātāpi bhrātaraṃ hanyād yena ghoratamas tataḥ ||

My dear Kṛṣṇa, you have acted improperly! This deed will bring shame on us, for to disfigure a close relative by shaving off his mustache and hair is as good as killing him.

Saintly lady, please do not be displeased with us out of anxiety for your brother's disfigurement. No one but oneself is responsible for one's joy and grief, for a man experiences the result of his own deeds.

A relative should not be killed even if his wrongdoing warrants capital punishment. Rather, he should be thrown out of the family. Since he has already been killed by his own sin, why kill him again?

The code of sacred duty for warriors established by Lord Brahmā enjoins that one may have to kill even his own brother. That is indeed a most dreadful law. SB 10.54.37-40

[54] Nanda said, "Then what happened?"

[55] The messengers said, “Gentle Rukmiṇī agreed with Balarāma’s instructions. Rukmī thought to himself that the instructions of Balarāma were more painful than being bound by Kṛṣṇa. He thus felt intensely aggrieved.”

[56] Nanda said, “Where did he go after this?”

[57] The messengers said, “After being freed by Balarāma, he met with his remaining devastated troops in a depressed mood.”

[58] Everyone said, “How could the cruel fellow, disfigured like that, go back to Kuṇḍina?”

[59] The messengers said, “Though thinking Rukmī should actually be doubly punished, Balarāma, to protect Rukmī’s honor, had him completely shaved by a barber as if he had gone on pilgrimage, and then put him on his chariot and sent him off. Holding strong enmity towards Kṛṣṇa and bad intentions on his return journey, he came to his residence and stayed there. What is the use of speaking about sinful persons? Enough said.”

[60] Nanda asked, “Did Kṛṣṇa return to an auspicious house?”

[61] The messengers said, “After he returned, as previously, he heard news of Vraja through Uddhava and taking Uddhava’s permission, sent us here quickly.”

[62] Nanda asked, “Was the marriage performed?”

[63] The messengers said, “No, no, it seemed to have been neglected. The reason was previously given. Hearing all the happy news from the mouth of Uddhava, how could Kṛṣṇa marry if it were not performed by you?” ||34||

[64] When Nanda and others were discussing in the assembly, two servants of Vasudeva from Dvārakā

carrying a message approached Nanda, offered respects, inquired about his well-being and then addressed him as follows, “O lord! Vasudeva has sent this letter.”

[65] Nanda took the letter with respect and read it.

“You are my friend, always thinking of my happiness. You are the root of all auspiciousness named Nanda. Embracing you, I, Vasudeva, make a request with all humility:

Your son, that you accept as your own, I also take as my son. We have no difference. You know that I know that. Who could think otherwise about us? Because we have the same feelings for Kṛṣṇa as our son, we pray permission for his marriage, just as you repeatedly pray for permission with your hand-written letters.” ||35||

[66] Saying this, Nanda said, “Alright, arrange to feed the two messengers. Later we will send a suitable message.”

[67] When all gathered they considered as follows pleasantly:

Since Kṛṣṇa’s promise to return to Vraja cannot be false, he will be delayed as long as the enemy has not been destroyed. That has not yet been accomplished, but sometime in the future it will be. While Balarāma is enjoying family life, it is not proper that Kṛṣṇa remains in an unmarried state, for Kṛṣṇa has written these sweet words to us:

yāta yūyaṃ vrajaṃ tāta vayaṃ ca sneha-duḥkhitān |
jñātīn vo draṣṭum eṣyāmo vidhāya suhṛdāṃ sukham ||

Now you should all return to Vraja, dear father. We shall come to see you, our dear relatives who suffer in

separation from us, as soon as we have given some happiness to your well-wishing friends. SB 10.45.23

[68] This statement reveals the following:

One should make arrangements so that friends may be happy. That is included in the happiness of Kṛṣṇa, known as a Yadu and *kṣatriya.* ||36||

[69] If he does not appear as a Yadu *kṣatriya,* because of not having oneness with them, other events cannot take place. Therefore, like Vasudeva, we will pray for his marriage.

[70] Nanda wrote this message:

Embracing my most affectionate son whose beautiful face is worshiped by all happiness, I make the following request:

O child! You know my heart––that I consider myself non-different from Vasudeva. For that reason whatever you do as per Vasudeva's desire, know that it is our desire as well. What a misfortune, if we were to ever think differently! How could I endure the poverty-stricken condition of your lotus face devoid of beauty? I could not endure it. ||37||

[71] Receiving the message, the two messengers, carrying it, left. After some days, as previously, two Vraja messengers arrived. After telling of the well-being of Dvārakā, they told what had happened in Dvārakā.

[72] Nanda asked, "After that what happened?"

[73] The messengers said, "O Nanda! When your son saw your letter, tears washed away the writing. Later he fixed in his heart the meaning of the letter." ||38||

[74] Nanda with tears said, "Then what happened?"

[75] The messengers said, “He underwent the marriage that you permitted.

In Dvārakā there was profuse music in each house and in the heavens, spreading over the high waves of the ocean, with one sound competing with the others. Crowded with Kuntī, Yadus, Kekayas and Kurus, as well as the people of Vidarbha, the wedding of Rukmiṇī took place with great festivity, giving great joy.” ||39||

[76] Nanda asked, “Did all the people of Vidarbha come?”

[77] The messengers said, “All came except Bhīṣmaka’s sons.”

[78] Nanda said, “Was not Bhīṣmaka ashamed to come?”

[79] The messengers said, “He was ashamed. He feared being slighted by Vasudeva’s group and his daughter.”

[80] Nanda said, “Did all the groups of the bride and groom meet together?”

[81] The messengers said, “Yes. All matters of the wedding were performed perfectly. But without your presence, our minds remained without peace. What more should I say about the topic?”

[82] Hearing this, as previously when Nanda’s assembly became pale, Snigdhakaṇṭha concluded.

“O Nanda! Kṛṣṇa, whose splendid face gives all happiness, does not shine as much in the presence of his father, mother, and unlimited relatives and millions of houses with immense treasures as he does on attaining your sweet glance.” ||40||

[83] Hearing this and seeing the pleasing color of Kṛṣṇa’s eyes, Nanda’s color was restored. He embraced Kṛṣṇa and everyone’s’ hair stood on end.

[84] Blissful on seeing Kṛṣṇa, the bards of Vraja began reciting.

Kṛṣṇa curbed all desires because of the sweetness of Vraja and considered a king's wealth to be useless. He had no desire to marry. At that time, a *brāhmaṇa* came to Kṛṣṇa.

He delivered the words of Rukmiṇī and relished the nectar of Kṛṣṇa's clever words in response. The *brāhmaṇa* left Dvārakā joyfully, came to Kuṇḍina, and told Rukmiṇī that Kṛṣṇa would come.

Joyful Rukmiṇī, desiring the wedding, offered respects to the *brāhmaṇa* with no fear. As a trick, she worshiped Durgā during the festival in order to be qualified to accept the feet of the Lord.

He shone perfectly when he took Rukmiṇī on his chariot and made the faces of the enemies' pale with lamentation. When Jarāsandha and others were disinclined to fight and the enemy was defeated, Rukmī instigated a fight with Kṛṣṇa.

Kṛṣṇa did not kill him but disfigured him by shaving his head. Having defeated Rukmī with his allied kings, Kṛṣṇa went to Dvārakā with Rukmiṇī.

Respected for defeating various enemies, he now resides in Vraja by the desire of all. ||41||

[85] When the day's topic was finished, the evening recital began by which Rādhā and her friends became happy.

[86] Snigdhakaṇṭha said:

When messengers arrived, the *gopīs* used to gather to hear, but not all the time, because among them, only a few of their assistants were present in the.

Understanding the times when the topics would bring happiness to the *sakhīs,* they would bring the *sakhīs* to hear.

[87] They heard a little about the marriage with Rukmiṇī through others. Just as Vasudeva wrote a letter to Nanda, Uddhava wrote to the *gopīs:*

Kṛṣṇa decided that he would never marry among the Yadus: “But if I do not marry her, she will kill herself. I do not know what to do if this happens.” ||42||

[88] Understanding the situation, the *gopīs,* afraid of responsibility for a woman’s death, wrote an answer for Kṛṣṇa:

We endure all difficulties arising from unfortunate *karma*. But we pray that Kṛṣṇa’s fame, like the moon, will not be spoiled by the death of a woman. ||43||

[89] When Kṛṣṇa heard Nanda’s letter, and saw privately the letter written by the *gopīs* delivered by Uddhava, he accepted the letter without joy. There is no use in describing this. But listen to this:

O Rādhā! Bold because of intense love, he who gave you up because of unavoidable duties now puts you on his lap, excluding all other thoughts, and has given up his defamation. ||44||

[90] Having dissipated all pain for Rādhā and her friends, spreading joy to all, the two reciters went to their residence.

Having attained each other, Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa, free of all worries, embracing each other, spread most splendid joy throughout Vraja. ||45||

Chapter Seventeen

The Other Seven Marriages

[1] The next morning Madhukaṇṭha began speaking at the assembly of King Nanda who was gazing with adoration at Kṛṣṇa's face, tasting its sweetness.

[2] As messengers came and went many times, two messengers appeared. Coming forward, they touched Nanda's feet and, on being questioned, they described eight constituent powers of the king—master, ministers, friends, treasury, kingdom, fortress, army and citizens and then about Kṛṣṇa, Balarāma, Vasudeva, Uddhava and others. Then they became silent.

[3] Nanda said, "Why do you not say anything else?"

[4] The messengers said, "How can we speak painful news?"

[5] Everyone said, "Messengers should tell everything. Why are you showing aversion?"

[6] The messengers said, "Rukmiṇī gave birth to a son. But the child disappeared. Without her child she began to lament terribly."

[7] Everyone with pale faces said, "Oh! Oh! Kṛṣṇa, who has a joyful heart, must have been filled with grief."

[8] The messengers said, "No, no. Rather, he relieved everyone including Rukmiṇī of worries."

[9] Everyone said with relief, "Then something auspicious will happen."

[10] After messengers came and went for some days, again two different messengers came and said directly, “We just saw something most amazing.”

[11] Nanda said, “What is that?”

[12] The messengers said, “One day Kṛṣṇa was playing dice with intimate friends in the Sudharmā hall filled with excellent *dharma.* As he was playing, some citizens of bold action, with great commotion, fear, excitement, like the ocean overflowing the shore, began urgently speaking, ‘Viśvakarmā has come to see you, who are the embodiment of all auspicious results, but it is painful to look at him with our eyes. Please instruct us so he will become as gentle as the moon.’”

[13] Kṛṣṇa laughed slightly and said:

The sun does not act in this cruel way with us. But in order to defeat us, Satrājit, who performed sacrifices to please the sun, having pleased the sun, is wearing a jewel given by the sun and has come here.

[14] This is well known:

A low person who has previously received affliction from others is unbearable in giving pain to others. The sun does not give as much pain as hot sand does. ||1||

[15] Under the influence of time, he will be punished.

[16] When everyone went to see him in a laughing mood and gathered in their houses, listen to the conduct of proud Satrājit, which Uddhava revealed while all were listening with astonished smiles: “Oh! Look, look! Disrespecting Kṛṣṇa, who is the center jewel of the sun—the source of Satrājit’s gem—the sun which dispels darkness in the sky, the crest jewel of the three worlds, the wish-fulfilling stone of his family, the master of the

Kaustubha jewel, Satrājit does not offer the jewel to Kṛṣṇa but rather wants to compete with him since he is full of pride on attaining it. Going to his house, Satrājit has commenced a huge festival, and has fixed the jewel in his room using *brāhmaṇas* from your assembly. Every day the gem creates eight *bhāras* of gold and destroys all calamities."

[17] Uddhava continued speaking, "What more should I say about this selfish person? Our founder Yadu cannot compare with the youngest of the inhabitants of Vraja. Brahmā has praised the ordinary people there:

So what is left for you to give these devotees of Vṛndāvana, whose homes, wealth, friends, dear relations, bodies, children and very lives and hearts are all dedicated only to you? SB 10.14.35

What misfortune! Let that be. The *devatās,* leaving Svarga, have sent the Pārijāta, Kubera's jewel and the Sudharmā hall. And when Kṛṣṇa, like a beggar, politely requested him to give the jewel to Ugrasena to test the jewel, Satrājit refused. The well-bred people do not want to accept the bones relished by dogs but they sometimes come out of curiosity to see the *pārijāta* and Kuvera's gem. If Satrājit has refused, very well. He will cause his own punishment."

[18] Nanda said, "Then what?"

[19] The messengers said, "Then we came here. The rest of the events will be told by two other messengers."

In that manner, two other messengers arrived. Producing auspiciousness, they told the rest of the story.

[20] "Seeing that Kṛṣṇa wanted the jewel, Satrājit gave it to his brother Prasena to keep. This was done to deflect

rumors that he did not want Kṛṣṇa to have it but this created more rumors. Then, Prasena, with the jewel around his neck, one day mounted his horse, and while traveling in the forest, died because of his past sins. People spoke loudly about this. Another catastrophe took place. Satrājit along with his assembly members spread the rumor that Kṛṣṇa had killed Prasena out of greed for the gem and made everyone hide in the ground out of shame."

[21] All the people of Vraja, hearing this said, "We all love his fame. By hearing blissfully about his actions in Dvārakā we can bear separation. But his actions for showing affection to Ugrasena and others have given opposite results, filled with evil. Our lives have become filled with misery. Let that be. Please tell the rest of the news."

[22] The messengers said, "Then we came here."

Day after day the minds of the people of Vraja were tainted with pain. For a long time no news came. Finally the obstructions ceased. One day after a long time, many foot soldiers came quickly. They were like trees which had been in the hot summer sun. With choked voices they said, "Everything is fine."

[23] Without giving them rest, Nanda took the leader by the hand and asked generally.

[24] The messenger said, "Understanding that a lion killed Prasena and that a bear had killed the lion, Kṛṣṇa followed the bear's tracks and entered its cave. He fought with the bear for twenty-eight days. He took the jewel and the bear's daughter and also accepted Satrājit's daughter." ||2||

[25] Allowing the messenger to recover, Nanda fed him and then in the assembly said, “Please tell the details.”

[26 - 27] The messenger said, “When Satrājit and others gathered and discussed privately every day, making accusations, Kṛṣṇa whose intelligence is like an ocean for the intelligent, understanding the situation but acting as if he did not, gathered hundreds of persons not too favorable to himself and favorable to Satrājit and began to discuss the subject.

‘Look. Suddenly we are having a great calamity. That is because one thief is criticizing me. Therefore let us go. We will look for the place where Prasena died.’ After considering this, he put those somewhat favorable to Satrājit in front and he followed behind. Noticing the tracks of Prasena’s horse, and fearing that the tracks would be obliterated by the vehicles, he began walking on foot, and found the dead body of Prasena with his horse. Seeing a lion’s marks on his body, he followed the lion’s tracks and then saw the lion’s body on the ground torn apart by a bear. Thus the earth reinstated the fame of Kṛṣṇa by preserving the foot prints of the horse and the lion.”

[28] Nanda said, “What happened to the jewel which caused his enemies to doubt him?”

[29] The messenger said, “The jewel could not be found though they tried to find it.”

[30] Nanda said, “Oh! Why was that?”

[31] The messenger said, “The lion and the bear both took it.”

[32] Nanda said, ‘What would the lion and bear gain from taking it?”

[33] The messenger said, “Like a mouse attracted to a gold coin, the lion was attracted to the jewel’s intriguing qualities. The bear Jāmbavān also was attracted in the same way.”

[34] Nanda said, “There should be no confusion for the great souls about the results of this incident. But I did not know that such cruelty and lack of mercy could manifest. Please tell the rest of the news.”

[35] The messenger said, “Following the bear’s clear tracks, they came to what was probably the entrance to the bear’s cave.”

[36] The people of Vraja said in agitation, “Then what happened?”

[37] The messenger said, “Making an excuse that he would go first, since all the others were reluctant to enter, Kṛṣṇa entered the cave with happiness, knowing that the result would be auspicious.”

[38] All who heard had previously said, “Then what happened?” Now they stopped speaking.

[39] The messenger said:

Entering the cave, he destroyed the darkness, which caused blindness, with the rays from his hand, and not being surprised at anything in front of him, eventually saw a young boy named Sukumāra, who was playing with the jewel, and his nurse. Without harming the boy, Kṛṣṇa took the jewel and remained there out of curiosity to see the boy play. The nurse however, suddenly seeing the strange form of a human, began trembling. She thought as follows:

“Oh! Though he has the complexion of a rain cloud, a face like the rising moon, and clothing golden like

Lakṣmī, he seems interested in the jewel and the boy. My heart, trembling with fear, has become unsteady.” ||3||

[40] Thinking thus, she began shouting. When she did so, angry Jāmbavān with contracted eyes appeared and, not appreciating Kṛṣṇa’s sweet beauty, fought with him with all his strength.”

[41] The assembled people said with consternation, “Then what happened?”

[42] The messenger said, “The fight continued for twenty-eight days and nights without rest.” The speaker stopped speaking, overcome with distress.

[43] On hearing this, Nanda and Yaśodā fainted and all others in agitation said, “Tell us what happened to Kṛṣṇa without regard for the rest of the story.”

[44] The messenger said:

His limbs crushed by Kṛṣṇa’s fists, Jāmbavān, his pride broken, spoke to Kṛṣṇa with praise. ||4||

[45] The devotee’s pain does not appeal to us. Thus we will not describe Jāmbavān’s pitiable condition. But Kṛṣṇa, affectionate to the fallen, mercifully touched him with his hand which gives all auspiciousness, unable to bear his elaborate praises. By that touch, he was freed of his pain and saw the beauty of Kṛṣṇa. Seeing Rāma’s beauty included in Kṛṣṇa, Jāmbavān developed the eight *sāttvika-bhāvas.* Kṛṣṇa made his mind become fixed on Rāma, and he then stood with folded hands, awaiting Kṛṣṇa’s order. Kṛṣṇa explained briefly his reason for coming. The best of bears, with a clear mind, considering the situation with shame, entered his house and brought his jewel of a daughter and the jewel, and offered them

to Kṛṣṇa. He satisfied Kṛṣṇa by offering him water for bathing, drinking and other items.

[46] Attaining Kṛṣṇa on whom she had meditated from birth, as her husband, Jāmbavatī fainted and her father became disturbed. ||5||

[47] Her meditation:

My father is an old bear. So is my mother. So are all their relatives. Living in this cave, how can I see other objects of this world? But who is this person, the king of the sapphires, whose praiseworthy words are as tender as a blossoming lotus, whose eyes are attractive, whose cloth shines like gold, and who attracts me constantly? ||6||

[48] Nanda said, “Then what?”

[49] The messenger said, “Remembering the nectar touch of Kṛṣṇa’s hand, Jāmbavān began to pray: ‘Just as I recovered from fainting by the touch of your hand, my daughter also will be revived by the touch of your hand.’ When Kṛṣṇa touched her with his hand she became conscious. Getting up after a *muhūrta* of fainting, she made bodily movements. Singing auspicious songs, Jāmbavān felt himself successful. Placing his daughter and Kṛṣṇa carefully on his shoulders, acting as a royal carriage, he carried them to the entrance of the cave. After the first thirteen days of waiting at the entrance the people of Dvārakā had given up hope and in grief returned to their houses. They did not enter the cave.”

[50] Hearing this and looking at the speaker’s face, the people who had lost their color said, “Oh! Why did they do this?”

[51] The messenger said, “Some of the people of Dvārakā feared for their own lives and for the lives of Ugrasena and others.”

[52] After recounting the words of the messenger, Madhukaṇṭha then said, “Some days after Kṛṣṇa returned, taking the opportunity, Uddhava in remorse spoke to the assembly with a derisive laugh: ‘The people of Gokula became disturbed by the agitation of Kāliya (for Kṛṣṇa’s safety) but we have become ignorant, and simply fear for our lives.’”

[53 - 54] Hearing this Yaśodā said, “Speak to Nanda. Why can’t someone not defeat them with proper reasoning and taking our son by the hand, bring him back? Why do they place the young boy among indifferent people with no affection? Oh! What should I say! If my stomach does not burst today, it is not a stomach but cruelty itself!”

[55] Hearing this, everyone cried. With choked voice Nanda again spoke, “Then what happened?”

[56] The messenger said, “The people returned after many days to Dvārakā since the place was far and the people were dejected. Hearing from them, Balarāma and others, with eagerness discussed about going to the cave. Some worshiped Durgā for auspiciousness. Some shouted at Satrājit that his life was finished. At that moment Kṛṣṇa blew the Pañcajanya. This was mixed with the auspicious music produced by Jāmbavān. Hearing this, Balarāma and many others became filled with joy, and produced an uproar of excitement. They met Kṛṣṇa and, seeing him, who made the jewel around his neck insignificant in effulgence by his own luster, took him to the palace along with the new bride with great festivity.”

[57] Hearing this, the people of Vraja decorated the messengers with golden ornaments and then sent off others pairs of messengers for other news because of their longing.

[58 - 59] When two more messengers arrived, Nanda asked as previously.

They said, “When Kṛṣṇa returned, he called Satrājit to the assembly with respect. After relating all that had happened, he finally gave the jewel to him with a smile.”

[60] Nanda said, “Then what happened?”

[61] The messengers said:

First the jewel turned away from Kṛṣṇa and then turned face downwards (in shame) to Satrājit. In these two ways it turned away. ||7||

[62] Satrājit began to think, “Kṛṣṇa is secretly angry with me. How can I satisfy him? How to prevent his relatives from cursing me? Ah yes! I should be clever like Jāmbavān. By giving my jewel of a daughter, even more valuable, along with this jewel, I will satisfy him though I have deliberately made him my enemy.”

[63 - 64] Thinking in this way, acting in his own interests (to avoid the curse), by the proper method, he gave his daughter named Satyabhāmā along with the jewel. He did not know that Jāmbavān (unlike himself) had awakened his previous strong *bhakti.* When Satrājit gave both, Kṛṣṇa accepted his fortunate daughter, for the sake of her life, but not the jewel, because he understood the girl’s devotion and Satrājit’s lack of devotion. His lack of devotion has been described. Satyabhāmā’s *bhakti* was unlimited and she had natural attachment to Kṛṣṇa. Satrājit’s giving the gem and his daughter was a

cause of astonishment for several of his friends including his father.

She had no other goal than Kṛṣṇa. From her birth she had *rati* for him. Out of shyness, she hid this from her father. When she reached youth, this attraction became fully manifested. How could she hide her *rati* and how could he restrict her? ||8||

Hear the amazing incident how Satyabhāmā from childhood would see Kṛṣṇa through the lattice holes in the terrace. The tears from her eyes mixed with the collyrium covered the whole area, making it into black Kalinda Mountain (source of the Yamunā River). ||9||

[65] Nanda said, “Then what?”

[66] The messengers said, “Then we came here. Look out for the next messengers.”

[67] When the reciter took a break, the bards of Vraja began praising Kṛṣṇa, describing some of the events of the future messengers.

> Dressed in fine cloth, sitting in the assembly, Kṛṣṇa met with the citizens. They said that the sun-god had come to see his lotus feet. ||10.a||
>
> Laughing, he said it was not the sun. It was Satrājit, who was shining because of the jewel. Hearing this, the citizens left, but Satrājit, like an offender whose life would be quickly finished, did not come to Kṛṣṇa. ||10.b||
>
> To reveal Satrājit’s pride, Kṛṣṇa along with Balarāma asked him to give the jewel to Ugrasena. Satrājit gave the jewel to Prasena and Kṛṣṇa laughed. ||10.c||
>
> When the lion killed Prasena who was wearing the jewel, Kṛṣṇa became grave. When Prasena did not

return, Satrājit's party reviled Kṛṣṇa and made him their enemy. ||10.d||

Searching for him with many others, Kṛṣṇa saw that he had been killed by a lion.

Following the lion's tracks to a mountain, he with the others saw that the lion had been killed. ||10.e||

Though they saw the marks of the bear, Kṛṣṇa did not see the jewel. Following the bear tracks, he came to a mountain cave. He entered so others would not lament for their safety. ||10.f||

Entering, he went to the excellent city of the great bear with a desire to take the jewel. He then saw the jewel. He saw Sukumāra, best of the bear dynasty, playing with the jewel near his nurse. ||10.g||

Kṛṣṇa wanted to take the jewel. The nurse, terrified and trembling, began to scream. The excellent bear, losing his intelligence, with a strong urge, fought with Kṛṣṇa. ||10.h||

He fought with Kṛṣṇa for twenty-eight days without a break. Fighting with him a long time, Kṛṣṇa showed mercy to him, as his own child. ||10.i||

Purified in his heart, Jāmbavān accepted Kṛṣṇa as his master and, understanding his offense, pleased him. With the highest devotion, he gave his daughter and the Syamantaka jewel along with ornaments and cloth. ||10.j||

Kṛṣṇa went home with the jewel and the girl. He gave the jewel to its owner and was satisfied with a successful act. Satrājit was ashamed and desired to give his most fortunate daughter and the jewel to Kṛṣṇa. ||10.k||

Kṛṣṇa wanted the daughter but not the jewel. The daughter had *bhakti* and the jewel he attained by endeavor. Seeing Śatadhanvā trying to flee with the jewel, instigated by Akrūra and Kṛtavarma, clever Kṛṣṇa killed Śatadhanvā and took the jewel from Akrūra. ||10.l||

Doing many actions, he satisfied the Yadus and he became happy. Without laziness, always fully perfect, the moon of your dynasty nourishes the bee-like eyes of the people of Vraja. ||10.m||

[68 - 69] Madhukaṇṭha said:

When two more messengers arrived, as before they spoke before Nanda: “Everyone is happy but there is one cause of sorrow, difficult to uproot. We do not know what will happen in the future.”

[70] Nanda said, “Ah! What is that?”

[71] The two messengers said, “Satyabhāmā and Jāmbavatī have not yet married him. Very sad, they do not eat.”

[72] Nanda said, “Why did they not get married?”

[73] The messengers said, “Because your permission has not been given. I think that Vasudeva is reluctant to obtain your permission.”

[74] Nanda said to all, “Now many kings will give their daughters to Kṛṣṇa. But there will be some obstacle because of us. At one time we should give a letter telling them not to be embarrassed.”

[75] Everyone said, “Yes. But send it to Uddhava.”

[76] Nanda said, “Let it be written this way:

Dear Uddhava! The many desires that we had have been dissolved by the creator. Do your actions with my general permission, by which a particle of goodness can arise for those women who have the quality of engaging in his service with devotion. Kṛṣṇa should be served in each house by his wives.” ||11||

[77] When the letter arrived in Dvārakā, Kṛṣṇa understood the contents through Uddhava. He sent a reply through a messenger indicating his agreement, which they happily accepted. Another pair of messengers then arrived on another occasion in front of Nanda. On being questioned they said, “Kṛṣṇa along with Balarāma went to Hastināpura in the most auspicious way.”

[78] Nanda said, “Why was that?”

[79] The messengers said, “They heard about the fear created by the enemies. All the Pāṇḍavas, entering a new house made of poisonous material by Dhṛtarāṣṭra, were burned to ashes with their mother by a sudden conflagration of fire. This is what they heard.”

[80] Nanda said, “What misfortune! What I did not want has happened. Two more messengers should go to Hastināpura.”

Two messengers went and returned. From them he heard of another misfortune. “When Satrājit was sleeping in the palace in Dvārakā some sly person killed him at night and stole the jewel.”

[81] Nanda said, “Oh! Is this true?”

[82] The messengers said, “Yes. Satyabhāmā, Kṛṣṇa’s wife, giving up peaceful words, not respected in that house, put his body in oil to preserve it and with tearful

eyes came to Hastināpura with great effort and described everything to them.”

[83] Nanda said, “Then what happened?”

[84] The messengers said, “The brothers, in great grief, did not remain there for an instant but departed for Dvārakā with her.”

[85] Nanda said, “Oh! It is good that my son gave up the association of Dhṛtarāṣṭra. Now we will understand the particulars from the mouths of messengers coming from Dvārakā.”

[86] Among the messengers two came and after inquires about their welfare, they gave this information, “Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma had arrived in Dvārakā.”

[87] Nanda said, “When they arrived what happened?”

[88] The messengers said, “When they arrived, they questioned everyone about the killer of Satrājit and concluded the cause.”

[89] Nanda said, “How did they do this?”

[90] The messengers said, “His sin produced his death.”

[91] Nanda said, “Please explain this.”

[92] The messengers said:

One spy told this to Kṛṣṇa privately. Seeing the opportunity when Kṛṣṇa was not in Dvārakā and hearing of the scheming of Dhṛtarāṣṭra towards the Pāṇḍavas, seeing this as significant, Akrūra gave up *dharma* for his own interests and with Kṛtavarmā spoke frankly to Śatadhanvā. “Why do you not take the jewel?”

[93] Śatadhanvā said, “Whose jewel?”

[94] Akrūra said, “The rascal who was afraid of Kṛṣṇa, for getting our help, promised us his daughter, but then gave up the Vedas and gave her to Kṛṣṇa.”

[95] Śatadhanvā said, “By taking other’s property one’s auspiciousness is destroyed.”

[96] The two said, “Fool! Know that instead of taking the bride given to him take the jewel. What is the fault in that?”

[97] Śatadhanvā said, “Satrājit sleeps with the jewel around his neck. How to take it?”

[98] The two said, “Fool! If you say he is sleeping, what loophole are we suggesting?”

[99] Śatadhanvā said, “If he wakes while I take the jewel it will be a condemned act.”

[100] Akrūra said, “O fool! Should he not go to the same place as his brother?”

[101] Hearing this, all the people of Vraja said while laughing, “What was his intention?”

[102] Upananda said, “Satrājit deserves to be killed by unknown means like Prasena.”

[103] Everyone said, “Akrūra is righteous. His fame is known in far lands.”

[104] Nanda said, “Controlled by the workings of fate, when a devotee like Akrūra makes a mistake it is not a laughing matter.”

[105] The messengers said, “Uddhava examined the cause of such actions. It was not the result of being cursed by the people of Vraja for taking Kṛṣṇa away. Bad acts arise from being separate from Kṛṣṇa, by association with those who oppose him.”

[106] Nanda said, “Let that be. Tell us what the spy later found out.”

[107 - 108] The messengers said, “Śatadhanvā killed Satrājit and stole the gem. But it was not given to Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma though they had asked for it. Uddhava revealed this about Satrājit:

Satrājit kept the jewel in his house because it gave wealth. Keeping the jewel in the house to avoid destruction brought all destruction. Listen! His brother was killed in the forest and he was killed in his house. One can clearly understand that all things not favorable to Kṛṣṇa are destroyed.” ||12||

[109] Nanda said, “Then what happened?”

[110 - 112] The messengers said, “Understanding the truth, Kṛṣṇa was about to kill Śatadhanvā, but he did not kill him immediately. ‘If he flees alone, this will be the opportunity to kill him. Then there will no longer be disturbance in Dvārakā.’ When it was clear that he was the killer, Śatadhanvā became frightened. Cruel Akrūra and Kṛtavarmā, afraid of Kṛṣṇa, refused to protect him. Without shelter, he mounted a speedy horse and fled. Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma pursued him on their chariots. When Kṛṣṇa came to a grove in Mithilā, Śatadhanvā gave up his almost-dead horse and fled. Pursuing the murderer on foot quickly, Kṛṣṇa threw his whirling cakra and cut off his head. He searched his clothing of two pieces but could not find the jewel. Going to Balarāma, he said confidentially, ‘It was useless to kill Śatadhanvā. We could not get the jewel.’ Balarāma, whose eyes were contracted, spoke to lamenting Kṛṣṇa. ‘The ignorant fellow has given the jewel to some trustworthy person in the city. Go there quickly. I want to see the king of

Mithilā who has been distracted and has diminished *prema* for me.’”

[113] As the talk progressed, everyone asked the two messengers “What Balarāma said seems to be untrue—giving up Kṛṣṇa and going alone. Please explain how this impossibility is possible.”

[114] The messengers said, “There is one auspicious reason for this. Do not disbelieve it. Balarāma thought as follows. ‘Śatadhanvā trusted Akrūra and Kṛtavarmā. Those two had instigated him to steal the jewel and kill Satrājit. They were thus cursed. He gave the jewel to Akrūra because he was famous for his righteousness. But the people of Vraja, who were immersed in affection for Kṛṣṇa, who became burned by the fire of approaching separation, saw Akrūra as cruel. This subject is not to my taste. Kṛṣṇa will be respected with wealth beyond the ordinary. That need not be described. Later the wise will describe this. It is not to my liking to go back to Dvārakā, but all-tolerant Kṛṣṇa should go, for when he alone arrives quickly on his chariot no enemy will be able to do anything. He will shoot his weapons and face him and speak. But I will not see that. On the pretext of seeing a friend, I will maintain some affectionate anger.’”

[115] Nanda said, “By contact with a contaminated object a crystal appeares contaminated though it is pure white within. Let that be! Let us return to the topic. Did Kṛṣṇa return to Dvārakā?”

[116] The messengers said, “He went there and we then left.”

[117] Nanda said, “Śatadhanvā because of his sinful nature was not supposed to be burned. His funeral rites

were nil. What happened to sinful Akrūra and Kṛtavarmā?”

[118] The messengers said while laughing, “The two fled at high speed from Dvārakā.”

[119] When messengers repeatedly came with news about Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma, one day, two messengers came and gave news about remarkable Dvārakā: “O Nanda! Now Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma have gone to Indraprastha.”

[120] Nanda said, “For what purpose?”

[121] The messengers said, “To meet the five Pāṇḍavas along with Kuntī.”

[122] Nanda said, “Oh! So her sons and she were saved from the fire?”

[123] The messengers said, “Yes.”

[124] Nanda said in joy, “How was that?”

[125] The messengers said, “They followed an underground path hinted at by Vidura.”

[126] Nanda said, “The Pāṇḍavas like shady trees for our son, though almost burnt, sprouted again by protecting their bodies through sowing them in the earth.”

[127] The messengers said, “O Nanda, that’s what happened! What can we say? Then they married Draupadī together and now remain in the same house.”

[128] Everyone said, “How can you say that they all married her?”

[129] The messengers said, “That story cannot be immediately confirmed.”

[130] Nanda said, “The learned have some scripture containing opinions about this. Let that be. Kṛṣṇa and

Balarāma had come close (to Indraprastha).” Putting a secret message for Kṛṣṇa in a food box, Nanda gave it to messengers, telling them to go. It describes their lamentable condition:

If a son is far away, the father can go there and the mother can see that. Or both can go. Or the son can come and see them. But for us, things are otherwise. (We cannot go and he cannot come.) Since he is in a situation impossible to approach, we cannot bear this situation. The messengers can see his beauty, but we are unfortunate. ||13||

[131] Everyone with tears in their eyes and hairs standing on end said, “If the messengers’ eyes were our eyes, we would be able to taste his lotus face. Those eyes, coming and going with the playful movements like bees, would satisfy us completely, who would drink the honey, but who have dried up and are situated far from you.” ||14||

[132] Having sent off the messengers with articles for Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma, the people of Vraja cried. Two messengers came from Kṛṣṇa and offered respects. Offering respects to Kṛṣṇa’s representative, they read this attractive message in the letter from Kṛṣṇa:

Until I have clearly killed all the enemies I cannot return. But by another method I am constantly there. I am pleased if you take that *sphūrti* as my external form.

If you do not, then it will cause great pain for me as it will for you. ||15||

[133] They also revealed a message from Balarāma. It was his representative:

O Nanda! You are my father and Yaśodā is my mother. I cannot think of you as different from Vasudeva and Devakī. I am delayed in coming because Kṛṣṇa is delayed. If he delays too long I will come sooner. ||16||

[134] Putting this in his mind and believing it, taking a breath, Nanda asked, “Who is affectionate to Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma among the Kurus?”

[135] The messengers said:

Kuntī and the five Pāṇḍavas, sons of Kuntī, are affectionate to him. Kuntī always praises Yaśodā’s *prema.* Yudhiṣṭhira praises Nanda, Bhīma praises Balarāma, Arjuna praises the cowherd Arjuna, and Nakula and Sahadeva praise the *prema* of Stoka-kṛṣṇa. The sages on seeing them describe the pastimes of Vraja to them. ||17||

[136] Also Vidura, understanding those types of love, listens to those narrations eagerly.

[137] Nanda said, “Oh! We have concluded that topic. Let that be, now please tell what Kṛṣṇa desired to do.”

[138] The messengers said:

After some days, Kṛṣṇa sent Balarāma and others to Dvārakā. Desiring to have fun in the forest with Arjuna, he was wandering on the bank of the Yamunā. When Agni (the mouth of the *devatās)* begged for food, Kṛṣṇa made the Khāṇḍava forest, inhabited by ferocious Yakṣas, Rākṣasas, snakes, tigers, lions, bears and deer, into Agni’s food. On another day he took away the daughter of the sun. At that time we met him for getting service.

[139] Kṛṣṇa went into a forest with Arjuna and entered a dense, pleasurable area having trees like umbrellas,

giving tempting fruits and flowers, filled with many birds, far from the water. He entered a hermitage to rest for a short period. He looked in all directions and with astonishment, smiles, regret and compassion, experienced the cries of parrots and *śārika* birds to be the lamentation of the *gopīs* having attachment to him.

O prince of Vraja! O sapphire jewel! O touchstone of Vraja! O moon of Vṛndāvana! O dear lover of the Vraja *gopīs*! O giver of joy to the three worlds by dancing on the Yamunā shore! O beloved! When will you see those young girls? ||18||

The voice meant to say *mat tīra* (my bank) but because of agitation said *tat-tīra*.

[140] Everyone said, “What happened then?”

[141] The messengers said:

On the order of Kṛṣṇa, Arjuna searched everywhere and saw a dark young woman of splendid beauty, in the distance. Desiring a special husband, she was performing austerities, and offering worship and respects to her deity.

[142] Seeing her with astonishment, Arjuna informed Kṛṣṇa. Desiring her, in order to enter that nearby place, Kṛṣṇa sent Arjuna. By the radiance of his smile he made black Arjuna turn white. Gently approaching her, Arjuna lowered his head and asked, “Who are you? Why are you performing difficult austerities?”

[143] Embarrassed and disturbed on seeing someone other than Kṛṣṇa near her in a lonely forest, suddenly she introduced herself:

“O brother! I am the daughter of the sun-god, named Yamunā. I am doing austerities. I live in the water in a

dwelling made by my father. I am constantly vowing that the person who satisfies the universe and plays in Vṛndāvana will be my husband.” ||19||

[144] Everyone asked the messengers, “Why did she go to another place and perform austerities for attaining her desire?”

[145] The messengers said, “She had ascertained that he would be in that forest with his close friend Arjuna.”

[146] Nanda, pining for Vṛndāvana, sighed and said, “Then what happened?”

[147 - 148] The messengers said:

With tears in his eyes, and choked voice Arjuna quickly went to Kṛṣṇa and told what she had said. “I have great attraction for the Yamunā and for her black color. She should flow in the middle of Vṛndāvana,” with this reasoning, he approached her on an island. Her eyes were astonished by his radiance and constantly followed him because of his variegated beauty. She glanced at him and immediately fainted. At that place the two, spreading their dark complexions, established their bonds of *prema.*

[149] When tears flowed from one, perspiration flowed from the other. When one became stunned, the other regained consciousness. When this happened, Arjuna assisted Kṛṣṇa and after some time brought him out of that astonishing condition.

[150] His thirst awakened by *anurāga,* Kṛṣṇa put her on his chariot in that condition and recovered after a long time. He sent her to Kuntī secretly by Arjuna, and the women of the palace took her down from the chariot.

[151] Hearing from Arjuna, Kuntī looked at her with curiosity. Determining who she was, astonished with unblinking eyes, filled with respect and affection, she placed her among the best of women.

[152] Madhukaṇṭha said:

Giving them cloth and ornaments, Kṛṣṇa sent off two messengers. Nanda heard the news from two other messengers:

O Nanda! Your son built Yudhiṣṭhira's city with Viśvakarmā's help. Previously he gave the Khāṇḍava forest of Indra to Agni. On offering the forest, a huge blaze arose. Saving Mayadānava from the fire, Mayadānava built the assembly hall. Giving the hall to the Pāṇḍavas, he sent Yamunā to Dvārakā. ||20||

[153] In building the city and hall, Indra became the object of joking.

O Indra! Previously full of cuckoos and other birds, the Khāṇḍava forest now remains full of embers. Do not have a crooked mind. ||21||

[154] In the assembly, Nanda said with a smile, "No one can compare with the daughter of the sun, most fortunate, who comes from a respected royal lineage. I do not consider it proper unless her father gives her. Please describe the details."

[155] The messengers said:

Hearing the news, the sun-god was greatly pleased. He invited all the *devatās* for the festival and came to Dvārakā, which defeats the pride of Svarga. Dvārakā with all its houses brought the sun-god under control with its beauty, and attracted the earth by its unprecedented festivities. ||22||

How to describe his amazement, since the sun-god was an astrologer, knower of Vedic rites and father of the bride? When he gave the bride and glanced at the groom, he became motionless like a picture. There was nothing as amazing as this. ||23||

[156] Madhukaṇṭha said:

As previously messengers came and gave news of five other marriages.

The Fifth Marriage

Kṛṣṇa stole Mitravindā, the daughter of Rājādhidevī, sister of Vasudeva, since Mitravindā accepted Kṛṣṇa previously as her husband when her brothers Vinda and Anuvinda opposed and enemy kings wanted to marry her. ||24||

[157] The bards sing thus:

> He defeated the two brothers who opposed his marriage to Mitravindā and similarly defeated the enemy kings since she had similar powers of *vīra* (courage). The sage Bharata defines perseverance (*utsāha*) as the manifestation of strength in offering oneself to a lover or manifestation of strength to defeat the enemy. ||25||

[158] Nanda said with embarrassment, “The custom of the Yadus is not to marry a close relative. Kṛṣṇa did so because he considered his *gotra* to be different (a cowherd).”

[159] The messengers said:

It was not right for her to marry anyone else. Though her friends advised her that it was not proper to have attraction for Kṛṣṇa, on seeing him she became strongly attached to him as her only goal.

The women gave instruction in joy, “He is your uncle’s son and is like a cloud.” Her moon face then turned red in anger like the sun. ||26||

[160] Everyone asked, “Since she was in the inner chambers of the palace in Avantī how did she manage to see Kṛṣṇa?”

[161] The messengers said, “Uddhava has fully described this to us. Previously Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma had gone secretly to Avantī to study but they did not tell you since they feared you would worry. By dedicated service to *guru*, in sixty-four days they learned the fourteen types of knowledge and the sixty-four arts. They made their *guru* happy by bringing back their dead son, killing the Pañcajana demon and subduing Yamarāja. In doing such difficult actions for others, they moved the hearts of compassionate people. Understanding who they were, Rājādhidevī brought them to her house and welcomed them as guests with affection.”

[162] Nanda said with tears, “Because of the fortune caused by Parjanya’s pious acts, auspiciousness has occurred. Tell the details.”

[163] The messengers said, “The marriage was carried like his other marriages.”

[164] Madhukaṇṭha said:

Hearing about all these festivals, all the people of Vraja became motionless like pictures. What more can be said?

The Sixth Marriage

[165] The messengers said to Nanda, “There was a daughter of the king named Nagnajit of Kośala. She was bound by strong rope of attachment.”

[166] Nanda said, “Please explain this.”

[167] The messengers said:

That daughter named Satyā gave up everything because of desire for Kṛṣṇa.

The lightning of her glance appeared on the new cloud of his complexion. Rain of tears appeared when his voice vibrated like thunder. Not attaining his nature, she moistened everything with her tears. ||27||

[168] When her father saw she was attracted to Kṛṣṇa, joy overtook his heart. But he had an enemy in the form of his brother's son named Brhadbala. At the insistence of friends combined with strong armies, the king could not do as he wanted.

[169] After much thinking, he concluded as follows: "An action must be found for which no *kṣatriya* has the power, and by which, skill from practice cannot succeed, but which Govinda, who is endowed with all powers and who was enthroned by the *devatās* headed by Indra and Surabhī, can perform. The opportunity should be found in simultaneously tying up seven bulls raised with joy, which cannot be moved by anyone, which have the nature of great demons, which cannot tolerate the smell of heroes, which are filled with anger, and which possess unconquerable power."

[170] After thinking in this way, with the permission of Bṛhadbala he saw that the groups of warriors, powerful kings of the world, who had been summoned by Bṛhadbala and had close association with him, all got their limbs broken by the bulls. Consulting the wise, he called Kṛṣṇa with affection.

[171] Nanda said, "Then what happened."

[172] The messengers said:

With a huge army for support, Kṛṣṇa came with an excited heart. Arjuna and Balarāma came with him. Knowing the affection and intentions of the king, he sent him a message through one of the leaders in secret in order to subdue or be subdued by the seven bulls which could not be controlled by the whole world:

“O king! What you have decided is something of Indra’ capacity. Your desire to give your daughter to the person who can bind the bulls, out of a desire for finding the strongest person, is only a pretext. This is not an agreement for *kṣatriya-dharma*—to give in exchange for a tax. I ask for your daughter out of affection as one asks a boon from a *devatā*. I do not desire to pay the tax.”

Ashamed, the king sent a reply through the messenger: “Your words are correct. I did not arrange this exchange for my daughter but I have decided that taming the seven bulls in exchange for my daughter is the way that you can marry her.”

[173] Nanda said, “Then what happened?”

[174] The messengers said:

Kṛṣṇa smiled and did as the king desired.

Kṛṣṇa tied up the demonic bulls with sharp horns, fixed on killing everyone, that could not be touched, that galloped about in the strong enclosure, roaring fiercely with strong breathing. Seeing those bulls, the universe shouted in dismay and became blind. ||28||

To bind the bulls, Kṛṣṇa’s body became like rope, and the rope was incidental for, stunning the bulls and all enemies, he shone like the midday sun among them. ||29||

[175] Nanda said, “Then what happened?”

[176] The messengers said: When he subdued the bulls, the queens and all the men and women gave the bride to him in joy while music blared. After the marriage, he gave Kṛṣṇa all the servants and troops that he sent to accompany them home. ||30||

When the kings who were crushed by the bulls attacked Kṛṣṇa on the road, Arjuna fended them off with his arrows but he did not kill them, for fear of inauspiciousness. ||31||

[177] Nanda said, “Did Kṛṣṇa go to Dvārakā with all auspiciousness?”

[178] The messengers said, “Yes. Because of that, we have come here.”

The Seventh Marriage

[179] After two messengers left, two more arrived in haste and said, “The sister of Vasudeva named the famous Śrutakīrti had sons equal to Nagnajit, with fame equal to the full moon.”

[180] Everyone said, “How is that?”

[181] The messengers said:

They gave their sister named Bhadrā, full of all good qualities to Kṛṣṇa, who desired her.

The devotion of the brothers for Kṛṣṇa was born as their sister. Their devotion for the Lord was non-different from her. That devotion for the Lord manifested in her form. ||32||

[182] Like the two messengers, Madhukaṇṭha and Snigdhakaṇṭha began to consider, “We have had similar devotion from our childhood. Though this has been heard here and there after consideration, it should not be told in the assembly of elders.” They said:

Her limbs were dark and beautiful. Wearing yellow cloth she played with her friends. She worshiped the Lord using paraphernalia of a king. The well-bred girl held that desire for her Lord in her heart, felt shame, covered her desire and constantly lost consciousness. ||33||

The Eighth Marriage

[183] Other messengers arrived later and spoke. They said:

There was a king of Madra named Bṛhatsena in the spotless dynasty of Sindhunada, living in the west. He had a daughter named Lakṣmaṇā, endowed with auspicious qualities. Now an auspicious festival has occurred with special features.

Though the well-bred daughter did not reveal the *prema* for Kṛṣṇa dwelling in her heart, her mother understood it by her talking during sleep. ||34||

“O sun-god! I offer respects to you. Receive from my hands this worship including *arghya* and worthy items studded with precious jewels! I say to you repeatedly as your daughter, ‘I surrender to you.’ Have me married to Kṛṣṇa like Kālindī.” ||35||

“In the sky, a youth with the complexion of a new cloud sees me and smiles gently. I should know him. I hide among my friends.” O king! Your daughter Lakṣmaṇā has gone to sleep. Why does she always speak incoherently? I am her mother but do not understand. ||36||

[184] Her father, king of Madra, full of affection, gave a method which was difficult to perform even for Arjuna, who was the best among all archers.

[185] The king announced the following promise.

“In the wide courtyard there is a water trench which is very deep. In the trench there is a pole. On top of the pole which is covered, there is a revolving fish, while the base is uncovered. I will give my daughter to the warrior who can look at the reflection in the water and after seeing it once, draw his bow and pierce the fish with his arrow.” ||37||

[186] Deciding in this way, he distributed the announcement and called the warriors.

When the kings understood clearly the method of victory they announced their individual victories and were respected by the king of Madra. First they should take the bow, then string the bow, then pulling the string, concentrate on the target in order to succeed. ||38||

I offer respects to the king of Madra who humbled Anuvinda, enemy of Kṛṣṇa, in the contest to win his daughter. ||39||

Jarāsandha, Śiśupāla, Duryodhana, Bhīma and Karṇa were only capable of stringing the bow. Lesser kings were completely useless. ||40||

Arjuna touched the fish with his arrow, which no one else in the world could see. Though he was also victorious, the king gave his daughter to Kṛṣṇa who pierced the fish. ||41||

Arjuna previously had become pure in body. He was defeated by Kṛṣṇa because he attained his qualities by the grace of Kṛṣṇa’s smile. ||42||

Kṛṣṇa piercing the fish arranged by Bṛhatsena was only an excuse. It was an opportunity to pierce the pride of the enemies. The form was different but the intention was the same. ||43||

[187] How he pierced the fish is described.

He took up the bow and strung it. He pulled the arrow back to his ear with a thunderous shout and released the arrow. He pierced the covering and the heart of the fish as well as the hearts of the rascals. ||44||

The arrow pierced two or three attractive coverings which could not be pierced and then pierced the heart of the diamond fish rotating at every moment. By the arrow's friction with the coverings and with the fish, sparks shot out with a shattering sound, creating fear in the host of enemies spread everywhere. The arrow, cutter of demons, defeated them all. ||45||

When the auspicious moment of *abhijit* (victory at midday) arrived, Kṛṣṇa's time arrived. When that time arrived, he pierced the fish. When he cut the fish, flowers fell from the heavens. ||46||

When flowers fell constantly, the daughter of Bṛhatsena accepted Kṛṣṇa as her husband. When she accepted him, fine music sounded on earth and in the heavens. ||47||

[188] Nanda said, "Then what happened?"

[189] The messengers said:

Inflaming the anger of Jarāsandha and others, Kṛṣṇa placed Lakṣmaṇā, glowing pink like a lotus in her feet, hands, eyes and face, on his chariot and went to Dvārakā, protected by a cage of arrows. They prepared to fight him, but Kṛṣṇa beat them with a dense shower of arrows like swans under heavy rain. Some gave up their lives.

O Nanda! Just as the sun lights up your town by its light, so your son in Dvārakā lights up the city by his effulgence. ||48||

[190] Accompanied by Bṛhatsena with huge armies, they celebrated the marriage with great festivity.

[191] Madhukaṇṭha concluded:

“O Nanda! According to your order, Kṛṣṇa married all these women. Fulfilling your desires he is now on your lap.” ||49||

Hearing this, Nanda pulled him to his lap, keeping him there with joy. He moistened Kṛṣṇa’s head with his tears while Yaśodā fainted. ||50||

[192] The bards of Vraja sang, giving joy to all.

He married three queens including Rukmiṇī, with playfulness and joy, celebrated by *brāhmaṇas* and all others.

He married Kālindī who performed austerities to attain him. Lord of Vraja! Listen. He accepted Mitravindā, destroying the hopes of Vinda and Anuvinda.

He kindly accepted Satyā. He bound seven mad bulls and produced auspiciousness.

Her brothers found Kṛṣṇa, affectionate to his devotees to be most suitable and gave their sister Bhadrā to him.

O king of the cowherds! Hear about the eighth marriage. Understanding his daughter Lakṣmaṇā desired Kṛṣṇa as her husband, the king of Madra brought Kṛṣṇa and devised a small fish as a target. Kṛṣṇa pierced the unseen fish.

In Vraja, Kṛṣṇa creates bliss. O Nanda! He is present among the devotees. O king of the cowherds, present in the assembly! Look! Look! ||51||

[193] When the topic was concluded in Nanda's assembly, the speaker spoke in the assembly of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa.

[194] Madhukaṇṭha said:

When all these marriages were occurring, the *gopīs* were not completely aware of this through the messengers. They heard bits and pieces from others. This was stated earlier. Now the intentions of Kṛṣṇa should be considered.

Kṛṣṇa got married to pass his time since the *gopīs* and the queens were actually one in nature. ||52||

[195] The *gopīs* heard that Rukmiṇī and others were very affectionate to Kṛṣṇa during the pilgrimage to Kurukṣetra. This shows that they were actually one in form.

> Pṛthā, Gāndhārī, Draupadī, Subhadrā, the wives of other kings and the Lord's cowherd girlfriends were all amazed to hear of the queens' deep love for Lord Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead and Soul of all beings, and their eyes filled with tears. SB 10.84.1

Candrāvalī was Rukmiṇī. Rādhā was Satyabhāmā. Viśākhā was Kālindī. Lalitā was Jāmbavatī. Śyāmā was Lakṣmaṇā, Śaibyā was Mitravindā, and Bhadrāvalī was Bhadrā. Padmā was Satyā. They were almost equivalent in nature. ||53||

[196] Though they were of the same nature, they were not exactly equal in giving happiness to Kṛṣṇa. As rubbing oil on the feet soothes the eyes, so when he enjoyed with the queens, the *gopīs* felt some relief,

because of some identity. In this way they could pass the time without going insane.

Yes, the queens who are somewhat equivalent of the *gopīs* had internal *sphūrti* of relationships with Kṛṣṇa. One can understand that from two chapters in the *Bhāgavatam* (SB 10.83-84). But when Kṛṣṇa at a distance plays his flute, touches a creeper with his hand or touches the water with his foot, the *gopīs* become stunned, and their hairs stand on end out of joy. ||54||

[197] It is said:

> *evaṃ vraja-striyo rājan kṛṣṇa-līlānugāyatīḥ |*
> *remire ’haḥsu tac-cittās tan-manaskā mahodayā ||*
>
> O King, thus during the daytime the women of Vṛndāvana took pleasure in continuously singing about the pastimes of Kṛṣṇa, and those ladies’ minds and hearts, absorbed in him, were filled with great festivity. SB 10.35.26

[198] Kṛṣṇa also married sixteen-thousand other queens, which will be described later. Whatever has happened has happened.

Now however, O Rādhā! May the women of the city far away give up Kṛṣṇa whom you embrace, for now in Vraja even those who associate with Kṛṣṇa cannot compare with you. ||55||

[199] When the talk had extended this far, the two reciters went with all others to their residences. Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa, hearing the pleasant talks, attained intense bliss and went to the house of pastimes within the mansion.

Chapter Eighteen

Killing of Naraka, Stealing the Pārijāta Tree and Marrying Sixteen-thousand Maidens

[1] At Nanda's assembly filled with joy from seeing the beauty of Kṛṣṇa's face, Snigdhakaṇṭha began speaking.

One time when two messengers came as previously, Nanda said, "Please tell me what Kṛṣṇa is doing now."

[2] The two messengers said:

His fame is now beyond human estimation. This is revealed through questions and answers between Nārada and Indra.

> O Nārada! Who killed Naraka? O Indra, he who cuts down hell killed him. O Nārada, who rid Svarga of all enemies? O leader of Svarga, he who took the *pārijāta* from Svarga did this. ||1 - 2||

[3] Nanda said, "If there are details remaining, please tell us about this."

[4] The messengers said:

One day in Dvārakā in the Sudharmā hall, filled with the best *dharma* at all times, Kṛṣṇa, protector of the three worlds, was making everyone happy with his jokes. While he was doing this, suddenly what resembled a white cloud with a black cloud appeared. Not only did it shine

brilliantly but also appeared like a rain cloud. Rumbling of thunder even spread everywhere.

[5] Seeing this, everyone began describing it: “It is not a cloud because clouds come from above, not from the side.” When the people in the crowd were speculating in this way, from that form, sound appeared taking the form of syllables.

“Indra who accepted birth on our planet to protect us, destroying the demons completely and playing while performing his pastimes at will, making his appearance in a mystical manner, enters the Yadu assembly with the *devatās* with great devotion. May he see your lotus feet!” ||3||

[6] Hearing this everyone said, “This is Airāvata, not a white cloud. These are tears of joy, not a shower of rain. These are words of praise, not thunder. Indra has come to see Kṛṣṇa.” ||4||

[7] Nanda said, “Then what happened?”

[8] The messengers said:

On the order of Kṛṣṇa, the members of the assembly attentively called Indra. Indra, along with many reverent *devatās* came into the Sudharmā hall and offered respects. After respecting Indra, and asking why he had come, they took him to the hall. The *devatās* seated themselves, and with bowed heads and great devotion, remained silent for a few moments. At this time the sages began to think:

“As a huge sapphire shines in a pearl necklace, replacing a piece of glass, now Kṛṣṇa shines in the Sudharmā hall, though Indra was its master previously.” ||5||

[9] Kṛṣṇa spoke with modesty, “O Indra! We humans think that you, the protector of the three worlds have come here to protect the earth.” ||6||

[10] Hearing this, Indra spoke with a pale face, “The creator of all beings is Paramātmā alone. No one else is able to do what you do with your limbs.” ||7||

[11] Kṛṣṇa said, “Please tell us what we should do.”

[12] Indra said, “If there is cause for shame in a person it should quickly be alleviated. If there is no cause for shame, that shame (humility) becomes glorious in him. ||8||

[13] “Therefore I make a request. He who took birth in a contaminated place is living in Prāgjyotiṣa. He is named Naraka. All bad qualities are manifested in him. He has stolen Varuṇa’s umbrella and mountains of our jewels. O holder of the *cakra* and club! What should I say? He also stole Aditi’s earrings. Therefore we are ashamed.” ||9||

[14] Kṛṣṇa said, “His terrible acts are spread all over the world. It will be shameful if he cannot be stopped. If you permit, I can make ether into earth and earth into nothing. Therefore I can make your mother’s earrings exuding immortality into the cause of his death.”

[15] Indra said, “When Naraka stole my mother’s earrings, he also stole my ears. On hearing the news I became deaf.” ||10||

[16] Kṛṣṇa said, “He stole not only the earrings but your life airs. I have concluded that all the unrestrained enemies must be defeated. Please return to Svarga.”

[17] Touching Kṛṣṇa’s foot dust and putting it on their heads, joyful on seeing his merciful glance, they then said, “Our brother Garuḍa, deliverer of those in trouble,

the snake eater, should be your sitting place when you go to defeat him.”

[18] Kṛṣṇa said, “How can humans like us use Nārāyaṇa’s seat?”

[19] They said while smiling, “By our desire, the mood of Nārāyaṇa will be very visible in you now.”

[20] Kṛṣṇa said, “This should not be displayed in humans.”

[21] They said again, “What you do not want will be possible.”

[22] Kṛṣṇa said, “I take the order of the masters of sacrifice.”

[23] In jubilation they offered respects, and, remembering the Lord’s pleasure, departed on the path by which they came.

[24] Nanda said, “Then what?”

[25] The messengers said, “This was the opportunity for fulfilling the promise Kṛṣṇa made to Satyabhāmā to get her a *pārijāta* tree. Among all of his beloved queens, he proposed to give the tree to her. Mounting Garuḍa with Satyabhāmā, Kṛṣṇa, who can refute all scriptures, carrying Nandaka, the best of swords, went to Prāgjyotiṣa. He went with her in order to show the enemy that he could perform pastimes at will. There was also another astonishing event in this connection.”

[26] Nanda said, “Please tell us.”

[27] The messengers said, “When he mounted Garuḍa with his four weapons and departed, two more arms appeared on his body like reflections.”

[28] Nanda said, “We have understood that previously (at Garga’s name giving ceremony). By the mercy of Nārāyaṇa, he shows similarity. Garga said, ‘Your child will have qualities like Nārāyaṇa.’” (SB 10.8.19)

[29] The messengers said, “True, true. Satyabhāmā, seeing those extra arms, touched them and, covering her mouth with her cloth, began to laugh privately.”

[30] Nanda said, “Let that be. You should satisfy us with other topics.”

[31] The messengers said, “Seeing your son and his wife, personifications of emerald and gold, on golden Garuḍa, the *devatās* said, ‘A bird-like golden mountain is flying in the sky. Look at the couple. The couple is like a cloud embellished with lightning.’” ||11||

[32] Everyone said, “Oh! We have heard that her complexion was like Kṛṣṇa’s. Why have you described her differently?”

[33] The messengers said, “You have understood correctly. But it cannot be understood so clearly. That is the skill of Kṛṣṇa.”

[34] Nanda said, “Then what happened?”

[35] The messengers said:

He then came to the fortress city which the *devatās* could not enter. The fortress was surrounded by mountains, weapons, lakes, natural fire, insurmountable wind, and nooses made by Muras, who could change their form at will. Seeing that fort while on Garuḍa, Kṛṣṇa was amazed and he made Satyabhāmā’s hairs stand on end for fun. ||12||

[36 - 37] Kṛṣṇa considered, “I will enter this fort which the *devatās* could not pass by riding on Garuḍa.” By this

trick he entered the fort, not by strength. “Show of strength is for warriors. I should also show that.”

[38] Nanda said, “Then what happened?”

[39] The messengers said, “When he curiously entered the city from above, while traversing the whole city, he thought of smashing the fort completely.” ||13||

[40] Nanda said, “Oh! How did he do that?”

[41] The messengers said, “First he began destroying the five elements. With his club he smashed the mountains and with his arrows he pulverized the weapons. He submerged the earthly portions in the water tanks. Then with his *cakra* he merged the water into fire, the fire into air and the air into ether.”

[42] The people of Vraja said in amazement, “Then what happened?”

[43] The messengers said:

He then took the portions of earth which were separated as six thousand terrible nooses with sharp points, and shredded them with his sword, like cotton. After this, events occurred without a break.

Not only did the sound of his conch make all weapons useless, it made the hearts of all the best men useless, since it was the cause of fear. ||14||

He destroyed the walls with his club Kaumodakī. The stones from the walls fell on the backs and limbs of the enemy and killed them. ||15||

[44] A battle arose to cross the moats. The terrifying demon named Mura, who despised death itself, was sleeping in the oceanic moat. When Kṛṣṇa blew his conch while roving about, the demon woke up.

Two things bewilder me in this event: the bellowing of the conch and the sleeping of Mura.

The sound of the conch was equal to the thunder at the time of final devastation. Mura's sleep was also the shelter of complete destruction. ||16||

[45] When he rose from the water and stood with his trident, it appeared that five-headed Śiva was about to destroy the universe. When he blocked the path with the fire arising from his anger, it appeared that fire and the sun were colliding at the time of annihilation. When he displayed his five heads, it appeared that Kālāgni Rudra, extending his tongues to swallow everything, had appeared for causing catastrophe. When he ran forward as if to burn up Garuḍa, it seemed that snakes had burst out of Rudra's chest. When he moved about and threw his trident at Garuḍa, bellowing loudly with his five mouths, you also could experience it. It spread throughout all the places in the universe including Vraja.

[46] All the people of the assembly in Vraja, remembering previous incidents said, "What happened after that?"

[47] The messengers said, "Kṛṣṇa, who acts for the welfare of the *devatās,* simultaneously quelled all the disturbances and remained jovial. He cut Mura's trident in three pieces with two sharp arrows and stuffed the demon's mouths with five arrows of various shapes as if its mouths were quivers."

[48] Everyone said in astonishment, "Then what happened?"

[49] The messengers said, "The demon, desiring to show his skills, but actually desiring to die, threw his club at Kṛṣṇa, but the club, though strong, was smashed in

thousand pieces by Kṛṣṇa's club. Then Kṛṣṇa scattered his limbs by the power of his *cakra,* giving astonishment to all."

[50] Nanda said, "Then what happened?"

[51] The messengers said:

Kṛṣṇa then confronted Mura's seven sons, like elephants of the directions, exemplifying the elephants by showing pride. Their pride became more uncontrollable with the assistance of eight commanders-in-chief. He killed them also. Then Naraka, his pride deflated on seeing remarkable actions beyond human skill, felt hopeless. Seeing no alternative, he came in front with quickly moving troops and began fighting fiercely and fearlessly with all his hands. In that battle Kṛṣṇa shot all the enemies with his arrows.

Naraka had emerged from his fortress equipped with ten-thousand hands like the ocean. Accompanied by unlimited troops, he hurled fiery arrows equipped with the *śataghni.* Firing three arrows at each weapon simultaneously in all directions Kṛṣṇa destroyed those weapons. Just by his glance he destroyed the foreheads and other limbs of the warriors. ||17||

When the enemy troops moved crookedly like snakes, calculating that they were not violent, Kṛṣṇa used Garuḍa and moved close. ||18||

By flapping his wings, Garuḍa dissipated Naraka's powers. The two powers merged so that Naraka could do nothing. ||19||

When Naraka was about to hurl Śiva's invincible weapon, from a distance Kṛṣṇa destroyed it and destroyed Naraka's attractive forehead. Naraka could

not understand where, how, when, why, what or who did it? ||20||

When Naraka died, the demons lamented and the *devatās* rejoiced. ||21||

[52] Keeping Satyabhāmā on the back of Garuḍa, Kṛṣṇa landed on earth. Engaging men to gather the strong victory elephants, Kṛṣṇa experienced curiosity for a moment.

[53] Free of the burden created by Naraka, the earth became satisfied but lamented for her son. She brought all the articles stolen by her son including Aditi's earrings and placed them in front of Kṛṣṇa, offering beautiful garlands of various colors while the *devatās* praised him.

Approaching him and praising him, she made a request: "Being merciful you have liberated my son Naraka, unfit to receive a name, from bodily bondage. This is his son, living in fear from childhood. I bring this son to your lotus feet which are beneficial for all people. If you, riding on Garuḍa, touch his head with your lotus hand, not only his past sins will be destroyed, but future sins as well."

[54] Wanting to relieve the earth of fear, Kṛṣṇa just by his words spread fearlessness. As attractive flowers from Svarga fell on his body, Kṛṣṇa, of soft nature, entered Naraka's house. Entering, he saw heavenly wealth that surpassed the treasures of Indra, and saw what looked like moons (faces) with desire creepers (bodies). But when he saw those creepers were withered as if by the hot summer winds laden with dust, he lost his joy. But when Kṛṣṇa came in front of the creepers, they took on extraordinary qualities, as the streams of flowing nectar

from his beauty washed away the contaminating clouds of dust.

[55] When this happened, after a moment, they recognized each other. They were his eternal consorts. He was their eternal husband.

At a distance, Kṛṣṇa shed tears. They began to tremble. Those women had suffered the heat of separation. “Look now at Kṛṣṇa’s cooling form.” ||22||

[56] Everyone said, “Who were they?”

[57] The messengers said, “Oh! From childhood they understood that Kṛṣṇa was their eternal husband. When they were taken unlawfully by Naraka one day, they thought they were in hell. These girls, daughters of *upadevatās, devatās* and kings, were fortunate to maintain their vows.

> *nirviśantyo yathā devyaḥ sukhinyaḥ kāma-varjitāḥ |*
> *parivavrur mahābāhum eka-veṇī-dharāḥ striyaḥ ||*
> *sarvāḥ kāṣāya-vāsinyaḥ sarvāś ca niyatendriyāḥ |*
> *vratopavāsa-tattva-jñāḥ kāṅkṣantyaḥ kṛṣṇa-darśanam ||*
>
> These joyful girls, daughters of *devatās,* devoid of material desires, wearing one braid, sitting there, surrounded Kṛṣṇa. They were wearing reddish cloth, and were controlling their senses. Knowing the truth, performing austerities, they desired to see Kṛṣṇa.” *Hari-vaṃśa* 2.64.26-27

[58] Everyone said, “How did they maintain vows while excessively cruel Naraka was lurking around?”

[59] The messengers said, “Those who have studied the *Kālikā Purāṇa* tell us the following:

Nārada, knowing that they had great attraction for Kṛṣṇa, came to them and instructed them. Thus Naraka's future death was known to them and Brahmā. With that understanding, their time of marriage was established. When it was time for him to die, Nārada came there and spoke to Naraka. When Naraka revealed his attraction for the girls, Nārada said, 'Today is the fifth lunar day. If you come on the ninth day, then you can marry them on the thirteenth day.'"

[60] They all laughed a little and said, "After they saw Kṛṣṇa, what happened?"

[61] The messengers said, "Kṛṣṇa accepted them in his mind."

[62] Everyone said, "Mental acceptance does not complete the marriage. It seems Kṛṣṇa was not so eager."

[63] The messengers said, "Being most compassionate, he was eager to accept them. That is why he did not have Satyabhāmā descend from Garuḍa. Seeing their actions and understanding their love, he had them bathe and ornamented like *devatās,* put them on new vehicles, and sent them to Dvārakā with attractive chariots, elephants which defeated the elephants of the directions, horses faster than arrows, and caskets of treasure—all of which were like dowry gifts. After that he got on Garuḍa with his wife Satyabhāmā and through her hands delivered to Aditi the two earrings, had her wear them, and received her blessings. Accepting the worship of Indra and his wife, he left. On going, he took the *pārijāta* tree from Nandana forest."

[64] Everyone said, "Oh! How did he do that?"

[65] The messengers said:

First Kṛṣṇa asked Nārada for the *pārijāta,* but did not get it. He asked permission from Indra, and Indra asked him to destroy his enemies. On doing so, he came to Indra's house with his wife Satyabhāmā to take the tree. Indra did not give the tree. When leaving, Kṛṣṇa took the tree. ||23||

Kṛṣṇa, who appeared to protect the wealth of Indra and destroy his enemies, was sitting there. He asked for the tree as a reward, but Indra refused. Kṛṣṇa then displayed his warrior spirit, and fought with the *devatās* and Indra. He defeated them all and took the tree himself. See who has what kind of *dharma*! ||24||

[66] We two messengers have thought about this and come to this conclusion. Your maternal grandfather was of *vaiśya ābhīra* lineage. Your paternal grandfather (Devamiḍha), Vasudeva's grandfather also, was very famous in the assembly of the great.[8] Kṛṣṇa's identity as a Yadu is shown in verses like, "I lifted Govardhana for the benefit of the Yadus." (*Skanda Purāṇa*) The knowers of Purāṇas also emphasize the connection of the two brothers (Śura and Parjanya) like, "Nanda, the brother of Vasudeva, hearing of his arrival came there." (SB 10.5.20) In the scriptures dealing with real identity, by predominance of the father's side, the child becomes a *kṣatriya,* exhibiting courage. But according to the opinion of *dharma-śāstra*, the son becomes mixed caste, following after the mother, where the caste of mother and father are different. Thus the authorities have established that you have the nature of the *vaiśya ābhīras.* Anyway, now your son gives bliss to the Yadus and is worshiped by the world, because of his extraordinary powers. His present identity as a *kṣatriya*

is approved by the wise, but this is not actually connected to his being of *kṣatriya* birth.

[67] Hearing this with pleasure, everyone in joy said, “Return to the subject.”

[68] The messengers said:

Some describe Indra’s cheating propensity. When Satyabhāmā desired the *pārijāta* tree and went to the house of Indra’s wife, she saw a desirable, beautiful *pārijāta* brought by a forest goddess. Śacī put the flower on her head and said, “You are not qualified for this because you are human. But riding on Garuḍa, who makes the sound of the Vedas by flapping his wings, bewilders everyone (including you).”

[69] Seeing their ingratitude, and having done as Indra had requested, Kṛṣṇa took the jewel mountain along with the *pārijāta* to his house. ||25||

[70] Everyone said, “Indra acts like someone who has fallen in the mud. How many times must Kṛṣṇa wash him up? Please continue your discussion.”

[71] The messengers said, “The marriages were conducted. Nārada describes this:

> *citraṃ bataitad ekena vapuṣā yugapat pṛthak |*
> *gṛheṣu dvy-aṣṭa-sāhasraṃ striya eka udāvahat ||*
>
> It is quite amazing that in a single body Lord Kṛṣṇa simultaneously married sixteen thousand women, each in a separate palace.” SB 10.69.2

[72] Nanda said, “All has happened according to what Garga said. Now tell the rest of the story.”

[73] The messengers said, “Giving a message, Kṛṣṇa then sent us here.”

[74] Everyone said, “What is the message?”

[75] The messengers said, “Understand that all these forms I take here are to satisfy Vasudeva. After giving him my attractive expansions and taking his auspicious permission, I will come back to Vraja. The pain produced by fire is reduced by fire. I thus lament in order to get relief from the pains of separation.” ||26 - 27||

[76] Snigdhakaṇṭha concluded, “O Nanda! Do not listen to all the description of your son’s previous lamentations. Let your bee-like eyes see the sweetness of your son’s lotus face.” ||28 ||

[77] Hearing this, Nanda placed Kṛṣṇa’s head in his lap and soaked it with tears. He remained stunned for some time.

[78] The bards of Vraja began to sing.

Indra told you about Naraka’s misdeeds. You are always engaged in defeating the crooked kings. You rode on Garuḍa with Satyabhāmā. All sin is destroyed by accidental chanting of your name.

Out of curiosity you looked at Naraka’s fortress. You were waiting to give joy to the captive young women. You destroyed the fortress which gave fear to the brave. You were astonished on seeing the castle.

You create and then destroy all the elements of the earth. Seeing the son of the earth, Naraka, you destroyed him completely. Defeating him, you have unconquerable power. Quickly killing him, you showed no fatigue.

You gave his son the kingdom and city. Everywhere you satisfy the devotees. You completed the vow of the

young women and sent the fortunate women to Dvārakā.

Indra worshiped you with duplicity. You desired to steal his *pārijāta* tree. Taking the tree, you were surrounded by Indra's troops. While fighting intensely, Satyabhāmā was in your lap.

You showed your prowess in taking the tree. Leaving Indra, you roamed about. You sent back Varuṇa's umbrella and showed the special pastime of stealing the jewel mountain.

You show affection for your devotees and conquer the demons. Then you came back to your eternal home, Vraja. O hero! Victory to you! ||29||

[79] As previously Snigdhakaṇṭha spoke in the assembly of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa:

After killing Naraka in the company of Satyabhāmā who was compliant and happy with various conversations and strongly desired to see the fighting, after taking the jewel mountain and the *pārijāta* tree, Kṛṣṇa, the abode of all joy, the king of the merciful, went to Dvārakā. At that time, he carefully sent heavenly ornaments and jewels to Rādhā and other *gopīs* through assistant women of Vraja. Among the jewels and ornaments piled together, displaying two or three colors, an amazing letter was seen.

"To pass time I have accepted many types of women as representatives of you. But at every moment I feel lamentation and indifference. Whatever attractive bonds I have made I will cut with force and come to Vraja. O beloveds! Stay alive until I come." ||30||

[80] This was written from an external perspective. Actually however he meant, “O Rādhā! Whatever acts I perform away from Vraja, consider them to be external. Internally I am engaging in pastimes with you.” ||31||

[81] Snigdhakaṇṭha concluded with enthusiasm:

“O Rādhā! Consider the mental anguish from separation to be illusory. See! Kṛṣṇa with eager heart is here looking at your face with joy.” ||32||

[82] The two reciters, dispelling all sorrow, returned to their residences with the others. Rādhā and Mādhava ornamented the Mādhavī bower with their wealth of pastimes.

Chapter Nineteen

Defeat of Bāṇa

[1] In the morning, in Nanda's assembly, replete with happiness from Kṛṣṇa's effulgence, Madhukaṇṭha began speaking:

After many days, two messengers went and came back with many other persons. Arriving, and on being questioned, they spoke as before, "What you have asked about Dvārakā is most wonderful but what was previously not noticed is not seen."

[2] Nanda said, "Please tell us."

[3] The messengers said, "Rukmiṇī bore a child but when it disappeared everyone was dismayed. Now he has reappeared making all happy on seeing him. Not only he came, but a divine maiden came with him."

[4] Everyone said, "How was that? Please tell us."

[5] The messengers said:

This is known from Nārada's words:

Śambara stole Cupid and quickly threw him in the ocean. But Śambara then pulled him up from the water, though that child would be the cause of Śambara's death. ||1||

[6] By the instructions of Nārada, who takes the life of such demons and gives happiness to the gentle, the demon named Śambara, understanding that someone would kill him in a different form, thought about it, and began searching for him, taking shelter of illusory

devices. He thus put Rukmiṇī's child into the water. When the child entered the water a huge fish swallowed him, but as soon as the fish swallowed him, a fisherman caught the fish and gave it to Śambara as a gift. His cook named Rati cut open the fish and saw the child within. Understanding Śambara's bad character, she raised the child in secret. Rati was previously Cupid's wife. When Cupid was burned by Śiva's glance, she worshiped Śiva to regain Cupid. To please Śiva, Śambara took Rati into his house. Because of a boon from Śiva, she fooled Śambara by taking a magical body which could bewilder anyone. But when conjugal feelings for the small child constantly arose in her, she began to condemn herself.

[7] One time, Nārada, who gives bliss to all, secretly informed her, "O Rati! Certainly Śiva burned up your husband in the form of Cupid. He has now appeared in a non-different form in the effulgence of Kṛṣṇa, the source of his form–in the best form among all Cupids."

[8] Hearing Nārada's words, she gave up her attitude as a mother and took the child as her husband. The child grew daily like the waxing moon. When the child became mature and understood her strong of love, he became intensely angry with her. Telling him the secret, she pacified him and revealed her magical powers to him.

[9] What to say? A battle ensued and Śambara was killed. Then Rati brought the son of Kṛṣṇa to Dvārakā through the sky. He was known among the *devatās* as Māra (killer) because he killed the demon. As he acted like Indra and appeared like the moon, everyone considered him to be Cupid, filled with deep bliss.

[10] Nanda said, "Tell the truth. What was the form of that young child?"

[11] The messengers informed him, “The Vedas say that the father is reborn as the son. That is exemplified in Kṛṣṇa’s son Pradyumna. A person who resembles his father is called *manojavas* (quick in mind). Why is that? Because he is absorbed in loving affairs, just like his father. ||2 - 3||

[12] They all asked, “What was his age?”

[13] The messengers said, “He appeared to be the same age as Śrīdāma. But according to present calculations, he is six-years old. On seeing him everyone in excitement mistakes him for Kṛṣṇa–even his mother.”

[14] Again everyone asked, “What does the form of Kṛṣṇa, lord of our life, now look like?”

[15] The messengers said, “He appears just like you knew him in Gokula.”

[16] Hearing that, everyone looked at the messengers faces, and for some time remained with joy in their eyes.

[17 - 18] The messengers said:

> *tatra pravayaso ’py āsan yuvāno ’tibalaujasaḥ |*
> *pibanto ’kṣair mukundasya mukhāmbuja-sudhāṃ muhuḥ ||*
>
> What is amazing about this? Even the most elderly inhabitants of the city appeared youthful, full of strength and vitality, for with their eyes they constantly drank the elixir of Lord Mukunda’s lotus face. SB 10.45.19

If that is so for the general public, what to speak of Kṛṣṇa! You also remain in your previous state since he is roaming in your minds in his previous youthful state.

[19] Nanda and Yaśodā then thought in their minds, “Oh! Will we see, just one time again, Kṛṣṇa’s lotus face praised by the world and the face of his son resembling his?

[20] Nanda then said aloud, “What happened after Rukmṇī’s son arrived?”

[21] The messengers said, “There was a festival everywhere. For seven days when people came to see the child, the festival continued without break. This delayed our coming here. With Kṛṣṇa’s permission we got the opportunity to come here.”

[22] Nanda said, “Did they give the child a name?”

[23] The messengers said, “He was named Pradyumna.”

[24] Everyone said, “That name is quite suitable if we understand the derivation, since “Pradumnya” means that he will acquire great wealth.”

[25] The messengers said, “The people also call him by the various names of Cupid.”

[26] When the people of Vraja were in an anxious state, two more messengers arrived. After offering respects, with joyful hearts they spoke.

[27] Nanda said, “Please say what happened.”

[28] The messengers said, “Someone stole the Syamantaka gem for which Kṛṣṇa had to suffer censure from many people, though he had no desire at all for the jewel. The thief revealed himself by his actions to be some person that you respect.”

[29] Everyone said, “Who is that great person?”

[30] The messengers said, “The person who took Kṛṣṇa from Gokula and, hence, who was not blessed by you.”

[31] Everyone said in wonder, “Tell us how it happened.”

[32] The messengers said, “Taking the jewel, hiding from Kṛṣṇa, he went to Kāśī as a follower of Śiva and performed selfish sacrifices to advertise himself, while ignoring Kṛṣṇa. There he became famous as a wealthy man.”

[33] Everyone said, “Stealing the jewel was not for his own protection but for his liberation. That is proper. Moreover it shows his praiseworthy skill.”

[34] Others said, “Previously he was at the side of Kṛṣṇa and now he acts sideways (thief).[9] Instead of *pārśvaga* he is *pārśvaka*, changing the last syllable from *ga* to *ka.* In this way he shows his greatness.”

[35] When the assembly laughed, Nanda said, “Then what happened?”

[36] The messengers said:

Kṛṣṇa, who previously learned all amazing knowledge, using his attractively strong intelligence, understood that Akrūra was the thief. But, recognizing him as a *sakāma-bhakta*, he wanted to fulfill Akrūra’s desires, and was indifferent to taking the jewel back. When disturbances occurred in the city, the elders, by spies, concluded that Akrūra’s leaving Dvārakā was the cause. To prove Akrūra’s innocence, Kṛṣṇa, who purified sinners like Pūtanā, and who gives happiness to all people, brought Akrūra along with Kṛtavarmā to the Yadu assembly, and after respecting him, using clever words, asked him about the theft of the Syamantaka jewel directly.

“All the Yadu assembly and Balarāma are angry with me. I was defamed because of the jewel and thus suffered.

The assembly and Balarāma were worried about this. Balarāma is angry because I have not given him the order to search for the jewel when it has been heard that you have suddenly acquired great piles of wealth. I think, however, that the jewel can give happiness to a righteous person like you." Kṛṣṇa spoke in this manner.

[37] Feeling that it was not proper to hide the jewel at that time, Akrūra began thinking, "I now see that Kṛṣṇa desires my happiness. But I do not see that Balarāma is in the same mood. My desire has been uncovered, leaving me defenseless, by the joking of the assembly members. I believe the jewel box, though hidden by my cloth, is seen by all in the assembly. From that, they understand that I have the jewel."

Then he said aloud, "Since Satrājit offended you, how can he be innocent? How can we think anything else of Śatadhanvā? But I and Kṛtavarmā, though having done contrary actions influenced by your *māyā,* attained wealth. Though sending us far away, you by your mercy have called us. Kṛtavarmā is by my side and is not separate from me. I have entered Kāśī awaiting your order. Attaining your presence and your desire, I desire to give to you this jewel that I hold in my hands."

[38] The members of the Vraja assembly said: "His words are hard to understand. Please describe more."

[39] When he revealed the jewel hidden in the box as if ashamed, the crowd with great faith then shouted, "Victory, victory," indicating Kṛṣṇa. Those with no faith, having lost all auspiciousness, remained silent.

[40] Nanda said, "Then what happened?"

[41] The messengers said, "Though Sathyabhāmā's and Jāmbavatī's sons thought proudly that they were

qualified to wear the jewel, since Sathyabhāmā's father had owned the jewel and Jāmbavatī's father had the jewel in the cave, Kṛṣṇa, to show everyone that wearing the jewel was ordinary, with firm decision gave the jewel to Akrūra with a smile."

[42] Nanda said, "Then what happened?"

[43] The messengers said, "When Akrūra wore the jewel on his neck and appeared white because of its luster, he was not effulgent, because he was covered with the contamination of ignorance." ||4||

[44] After many messengers came and went confidentially, two messengers came and spoke: "As a favor to Rukmiṇī, Rukmi gave his daughter Rukmavatī to Pradumnya, her son, in marriage. A son was born. Not only did Rukmavatī bear a son but she bore all happiness as well."

[45] Nanda said with eagerness: "What is his name?"

[46] The messengers said, "His name is Aniruddha."

[47] Nanda said to himself, "This shows the learning of Vasudeva. As Kṛṣṇa is Vāsudeva, Balarāma is Saṅkarṣaṇa, so the two offspring Pradumnya and Aniruddha will be famous. They have the same powers as the *caturvyūha* after whom they are named."

[48] Nanda said aloud, "What does he look like?"

[49] The messengers said, "He looks like his father."

[50] Nanda said with a laugh, "All that is eternally arranged (*nitya-siddha)* has taken place."

[51] He said to himself: "Ah! O mind! Why are you so eager? Where is my son? When will I see him and his sons and grandsons?"

[52] Madhukaṇṭha said:

Please hear about messages given at other times.

[53] Messengers said, “Rukmī gave his granddaughter to Aniruddha’s son.”

[54] Nanda said, “It is good that Rukmi developed a liking for Kṛṣṇa.”

[55] The messengers said, “It was not because of friendliness but for his advantage.”

[56] Nanda said, “Let that be. One should look for the good.”

[57] The messengers said, “It was good for him too.”

[58] Nanda said, “Now Rukmī is favorable?”

[59] The messengers said, “Well, maybe not favorable, but it was good for him, at least in his next life.”

[60] Nanda said with doubt, “Why do you speak of next life, since that is inauspicious.”

[61] The messengers said, “It is related. Why do you reject this?”

[62] Nanda said, “Since a steady relationship developed, and Balarāma approved, how did he end up going to the next world?”

[63] The messengers said with a laugh, “By the fiery strength of Balarāma.”

[64] Nanda said, “How was that?”

[65] The messengers said, “Though he held his anger within, he released it with rage against Rukmī.”

[66] Nanda said, “Please describe this.”

[67] The messengers said, “At the marriage of Rukmī’s granddaughter, he finished Rukmī’s life and broke the

king of Kaliṅga's teeth, since quarrelsome Rukmī and the king of Kaliṅga instigated a rigged dice game and destroyed Balarāma's auspiciousness by laughing. Gaining strength from a voice from the sky, he smashed them."

[68] When the assembly laughed, Nanda said, "What did Kṛṣṇa want to do?"

[69] The messengers said, "Kṛṣṇa did not show affection for Balarāma or grieve for Rukmiṇī, but remained silent."

While the cowherds spent their time in this way, other messengers arrived and described the many sons of the queens, from eldest to youngest in order. But they did not describe other topics in which they were absorbed. Listening to the topics Nanda and the others attained great happiness and gave the messengers jewels specially set. But they did not give jewels to Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma through the messengers, for they remembered that Kṛṣṇa was determined to hide his relationship with them from others using many means.

[70] Learning that Aniruddha had disappeared from Dvārakā, Nanda and the others became disturbed. When they were discussing this in grief, two messengers arrived after a long time. Seeing them, they inquired and the messengers said that Aniruddha had been imprisoned. They spoke with without lamentation:

Bāṇa had a daughter named Uṣā. Aniruddha came to her in a dream. Waking up, she did not know who he was but her friend recognized who he was on seeing his picture. Attracted to him, Uṣā had her friend bring Aniruddha from Dvārakā by powers of *yoga*. When Bāṇa found out, after a battle, he tied up Aniruddha. ||5||

Hearing this from Nārada, Kṛṣṇa went to Śoṇita, Bāṇa's city, accompanied by twelve *akṣauhiṇīs*, and defeated Bāṇa and Śiva. Cutting off all Bāṇa's arms so that only four remained, he brought Aniruddha and Uṣā to Dvārakā and had them married with praiseworthy joy. || 6||

[71] The Vraja people said, "How astonishing! Why did Kṛṣṇa defeat Śiva? Please tell us."

[72] The messengers said, "Has a cloud surrounded by lightning, or a cloud of universal destruction arrived? Or has a flaming sacrifice using black magic taken a black human body? Or has Kālagni Rudra whose body is continuously bursting with fire appeared? Or is this Kṛṣṇa on his heavenly chariot made of jewels? Please look at him. ||7||

[73] When Kṛṣṇa shook the palace with his *akṣauhiṇīs,* and turned the city into blood using his beautiful *cakra* and blissful sword, Bāṇa came as quick as an arrow before Śiva and, surrounded by his soldiers resembling animals and by Śiva's attendants, also like animals, he came out of the city with great speed."

[74] Nanda said, "Why did Śiva perform such an inauspicious act?"

[75] The messengers said, "He did this to save Bāṇa, who was like his son, from danger and he wanted to kill Cupid, on remembering Pradumnya's relationship to Cupid. For those who deliberate deeply, this was a mere metaphor but the truth will reveal itself."

[76] Everyone said in fear, "Then what happened?"

[77] The messengers said:

Seeing Kṛṣṇa, Śiva began fighting with him. Kārtikeya fought with Pradumnya. When this happened, the world became unsteady. Brahmā and the *devatās* began chanting the Vedas. Arriving there quickly and carefully, they remained in the sky.

[78] Violent to all others, dangerous demons, ghosts, and countless other evil beings surrounded everyone, causing their hairs to stand on end. Desiring to fight, Kṛṣṇa, with great plans, placed arrows on his bow and hitting all their limbs, tore their bodies apart, making all the demons morose. Śiva's matted locks fell over his forehead with its three eyes, like flaming hurricanes. He raised dust everywhere. In this way it appeared that summer heat had arrived. Kṛṣṇa, with dark complexion, had a gentle smile, as if showering nectar inside and outside of all things. It seemed that the monsoon had arrived. In this way Kṛṣṇa fought with Śiva. Śiva released all his weapons to destroy everyone, and Kṛṣṇa released arrows to counteract his weapons in order to protect everyone.

When Śiva released the wind weapon, Kṛṣṇa cut it down with the mountain weapon. When Śiva released the fire weapon, Kṛṣṇa defeated it with the cloud weapon. When Śiva released many weapons, Kṛṣṇa released counter weapons. When Śiva released a *brāhma* weapon, Kṛṣṇa released a stronger *brāhma* weapon. When Śiva released the Śiva weapon, Kṛṣṇa released the Nārāyaṇa weapon. When he was shamed many times, Kṛṣṇa released the yawning weapon. ||8||

[79] Nanda said in astonishment, "Then what happened?"

[80] The messengers said:

As a lion after defeating a pack of elephants attacks the elephant calves, Kṛṣṇa defeated Śiva and then attacked the hordes of soldiers. ||9||

Though protected by armor, they died from the showers of arrows. Though they had helmets on their heads, they could not protect their heads. ||10||

Though they wore armor, they were bound up by arrows. Though surrounded by armor, they were pierced by arrows. Those with extra limbs became limbless. ||11||

Those clothed in armor during the battle died before soldiers who were not wearing armor, for Kṛṣṇa was eager to attack those with armor. ||12||

[81] Those whose actions were useless and whose hands were severed were all the same, since they were very soft as enemies. ||13||

Kārtikeya with his arrows advanced towards Pradumnya, thinking he was a cloud. Pradumnya’s arrows were like lightning bolts and made him flee. ||14||

Kumbhāṇḍa and Kūpakarṇa had befitting names (since one had testicles like pots and the other had ears like wells). Balarāma with his pestle cut off their limbs. ||15||

When all the troops fled, Bāṇa gave up his opponent Sātyaki and, holding five-hundred bows and a thousand arrows, ran towards Kṛṣṇa. ||16||

If the arrows could be released without bows, a thousand arrows could be shot. Or if Bāṇa could shoot two arrows at once with five-hundred hands, a thousand arrows could be shot. ||17||

O Bāṇa! If you hold two arrows in each hand then you could hold five-hundred bows. Kṛṣṇa will cut each arrow into two. ||18||

When he noticed all his bows cut by the arrows of Kṛṣṇa, he noticed his charioteer and horses had also been killed. When he saw this, he became agitated by the sound of Kṛṣṇa's conch and could not see even himself. || 19||

[82] Nanda said, "Then what happened?"

[83] The messengers said, "Then Durgā in the form of Koṭarā emerged naked from the inside of the house to shield Bāṇa whom she took as her son. When she stood in front of Kṛṣṇa, Kṛṣṇa covered his eyes and glanced in another direction."

[84] The people of Vraja said with a laugh, "This would have embarrassed Śiva also. Anyway, what happened next?"

[85] The messengers said, "Taking that opportunity, Bāṇa disappeared inside the palace. When he and all the assistants of Śiva disappeared, the Śiva-jvara, causing pain to all beings, appeared. Seeing that form with three heads and three feet, Kṛṣṇa, endowed with praiseworthy character, began to laugh and created the Vaiṣṇava-jvara. As soon as Vaiṣṇava-jvara appeared, he approached the most arrogant Śiva-jvara. When the Vaiṣṇava-jvara attacked the Śiva-jvara, roars of laughter arose from Svarga and earth. When fever acts against fever who would not find it funny?"

[86] Everyone said curiously, "Then what happened?"

[87] The messengers said, "The Śiva-jvara became feverish and surrendered to Kṛṣṇa. Receiving his mercy, Śiva-jvara, like a humble sage, began praising Kṛṣṇa. Kṛṣṇa, whose soft nature is described by Śukadeva and who was just like his devotees who have affection for him, was satisfied with him. Satisfied, he freed him from

Vaiṣṇava-jvara. Kṛṣṇa's satisfaction spread to all others like the moon. Kṛṣṇa said:

> *tri-śiras te prasanno 'smi vyetu te maj-jvarād bhayam |*
> *yo nau smarati saṃvādaṃ tasya tvan no bhaved bhayam ||*
>
> O three-headed one, I am pleased with you. May your fear of my fever weapon be dispelled, and may whoever remembers our conversation here have no reason to fear you. SB 10.63.29

[88] Nanda said, "What happened to Bāṇa, and what happened to Śiva?"

[89] The messengers said:

Śiva woke up after a long time and understood that Kṛṣṇa was the shelter of all knowledge and became peaceful. Incited by arrogant ministers, Bāṇa approached Kṛṣṇa on his chariot, like a demon arising from a malicious sacrifice, and covered Kṛṣṇa with a variety of weapons including arrows. Kṛṣṇa extinguished his flaming arms with his *cakra*.

[90] When Bāṇa had only four arms left, omniscient Śiva, best of the well-bred, the lord but not fully capable (though he is the destroyer of everything) put his auspicious nature in the forefront with a peaceful mood and approached Kṛṣṇa. Offering all his wealth which was his matted hair, he paid respects, and praised Kṛṣṇa with unfettered *bhakti.* When Kṛṣṇa was fully satisfied he made a request:

"Bāṇa became proud of the boon that I gave him, and considered you, my master, to be ordinary. I have made him understand that you have defeated me and also have defeated him. Therefore forgive me and overlook the fool

since you, full of wisdom, are different from him, full of ignorance. When I dance, absorbed in you, Bāṇa will play five-hundred instruments with his thousand hands to please you. I do not accept him when comparing him to your unalloyed devotees but since he comes in Prahlāda's dynasty, I am satisfied with him, since Prahlāda is dear to you." ||20 - 22||

[91] Kṛṣṇa said, "You and I have the same idea. Since we are one, what is the question of a requester and receiver of the request? I cut off his arms to curb his pride. His remaining four arms, devoid of pride, are for serving you." ||23||

[92 - 93] In this way your son Kṛṣṇa, giving auspiciousness to Śiva, gave bliss to his own people.

Kṛṣṇa brought Aniruddha along with Uṣā to Dvārakā and carried out their marriage. He sent us two messengers to your lotus feet, knowing it would calm you:

Here I have sons and grandsons but I have no internal identity with that. Previously I left Gokula, but even now I identify myself as a cowherd. My love is bound to the people there. How can it become bound elsewhere? My form and qualities exist before you. You see them with your eyes. I told my father that after making my friends happy and fully successful, I will see my relatives in Vraja. I am staying in Dvārakā in order to accomplish the quick destruction of enemies of the *devatās* who have many obstacles at present. ||24 - 26||

[94] Repeating the words of the faultless messengers, Madhukaṇṭha concluded:

"O Nanda! Kṛṣṇa said he would return. He has returned. Look at your son!" ||27||

[95] The bards of Vraja began singing.

When Bāṇa held Aniruddha captive, you searched for him. Going there, you spread your effulgence everywhere. O pure fame, you fought with Śiva. You defeated Śiva's army with all your weapons.

You destroyed all people with your weapons and made Śiva yawn. Shooting your arrows, you defeated Bāṇa. When Koṭarā, taking Bāṇa as her son, showed her naked body you became ashamed and turned away.

You counteracted the fever weapon with another fever weapon and then were merciful to the fever weapon, speaking kind words. When Bāṇa attacked again, you showed your prowess by cutting off his arms.

Siva then satisfied you with praise. Seeing Śiva's service mood, you gave him *sattva-guṇa* by your mercy. You generously gave mercy to protect Bāṇa.

You skillfully released Aniruddha from the noose of arrows and made your supporters happy. You brought Aniruddha home with his bride, displaying actions beyond human ability.

You then returned to Vraja. With your flute under your arm, you fill everyone with happiness. Victory! O king! Son of Nanda! ||28||

[96] In the evening, Madhukaṇṭha, as before, speaking words to glorify Rādhā and her friends, read a letter of consolation written by Kṛṣṇa, within a letter meant for Subala:

Having started the job to protect my friends and after curbing all disturbance, I vow that I will return. ||29||

[97] There was one letter for Rādhā especially:

Rāma along with Sītā endured troubles while in the forest. When Rāvaṇa stole Sītā, Rāma wept alone in the forest out of separation. Later ashamed because of evil gossip, he gave her up and maintained a deity of her. In separation from Rādhā, though I have happiness from sixteen-thousand queens, I am suffering. ||30||

[98] The speaker concluded: “Why do you, whom your lover consoled by vowing to return, have fresh anxiety about him today?” ||31||

[99] When the talk ended and the two reciters left, Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa, desiring each other, colored the love bower with their love.

Chapter Twenty

Balarāma Returns to Vraja

[1 - 3] In the morning discussion, Snigdhakaṇṭha began to think energetically, in order to introduce the auspicious topics of Balarāma's return to Vraja.

"Śukadeva has described the reason for his coming:

> *balabhadraḥ kuru-śreṣṭha bhagavān ratham āsthitaḥ |*
> *suhṛd-didṛkṣur utkaṇṭhaḥ prayayau nanda-gokulam ||*
>
> O best of the Kurus, once Lord Balarāma, eager to visit his well-wishing friends, mounted his chariot and traveled to Nanda Gokula. SB 10.65.1

He did everything in Vraja and Dvārakā according to the advice of Kṛṣṇa. He did not act independently. Vaiśampāyana says in *Hari-vaṃsa:*

> *kasyacit tv atha kālasya smṛtvā gopeṣu sauhṛdam |*
> *jagāmaiko vrajaṃ rāmaḥ kṛṣṇasyānumate sthitaḥ ||*
>
> Remembering the friendship of the cowherds, Balarāma went to Vraja alone for some time, with the permission of Kṛṣṇa. *Hari-vaṃśa* 2.46.1

I will explain this event accordingly."

[4] Then causing excitement in Nanda, Kṛṣṇa and others, he began speaking:

The great mutual longing of Kṛṣṇa and the people of Vraja that was previously described also applies to Balarāma and the residents of Vraja. When Balarāma

revealed his eagerness to go in secret to Vraja, Kṛṣṇa pacified him by saying, “Today or tomorrow I will send you there.”

[5 - 6] One day, yearning to go there, he informed Kṛṣṇa privately while weeping with a choking voice. “O Kṛṣṇa! You did not go at once to satisfy Nanda and Yaśodā. That has burned their hearts. I do not understand your intentions. It seems you have forgotten all about them.” ||1||

[7] Kṛṣṇa said, “Oh! Oh! That love for Vraja is always within me! How can I separate it from me? But Nanda also says that it is not proper to go against the wishes of Vasudeva and Devakī. They never want me to go to Vraja. In order that I do not act against both of their desires, I cannot go to Vraja. Therefore I suffer. If you can adjust their desires, I will be glad to go immediately to Vraja.”

[8] Balarāma wanted Vasudeva and Devakī to give their consent for him and Kṛṣṇa to go to Vraja. He did not get permission for Kṛṣṇa to go. Thinking a great disaster would result if they allowed only him, with some anger he spoke to them.

“O mother and father! What is the difference between Kṛṣṇa and me? I am also the child of Nanda and Yaśodā.” ||2||

[9] He informed his brother: “On your request, I have avoided going to Vraja for a long time, stopping my feet from moving towards the place. Our parents have not given permission for you to go. Therefore please give permission for me alone to see the people of Vraja.”

[10] Informing Rohiṇī of everything, Kṛṣṇa then embraced Balarāma and, lamenting his own bad

character, spoke with sadness on his face, remembering Nanda and others. First he spoke about Balarāma's herding pastimes and the service of his many friends, using joking words:

"O greatest of lords, just see how these trees are bowing their heads at your lotus feet, which are worshipable by the immortal demigods. The trees are offering you their fruits and flowers to eradicate the dark ignorance that has caused their birth as trees. But above all, you have embraced the young cowherd women between your two arms–a favor hankered after by the goddess of fortune herself." SB 10.15.8

Then he spoke of the *horikā* pastimes after killing Śaṅkhacūḍa, where shame from the viewpoint of scripture and common custom was overcome. This is described in the *Bhāgavatam*:

> *kadācid atha govindo rāmaś cādbhuta-vikramaḥ*
> *vijahratur vane rātryāṃ madhya-gau vraja-yoṣitāṃ*
>
> Once Lord Govinda and Lord Rāma, the performers of wonderful feats, were playing in the forest at night with the young girls of Vraja. SB 10.34.20

Thus, he reminded Balarāma of their joyful companionship to extinguish the pain of separation, by taking representative, joyful events involving singing, joking and seeing which produced happiness. After that he expressed what he wanted:

The creator is against me, and thus you go from Dvārakā to Vraja alone. You, the elder brother, will bring me to Vraja. Your going first will bring me there quickly. ||3||

Though I have consoled the people of Vraja through the mouth of Uddhava, you must give sweet instructions to Vraja, for you are more attracted to Vraja than I. ||4||

If you cannot completely satisfy them with your words, then promise them that I will come. If you see that they are still troubled, I will appear there as a *sphūrti* by my power. ||5||

If these methods of consolation do not work, do other actions on my request: accept for yourself those girls who are still quite young. ||6||

I have eagerly told them to you by name. The *gopīs* on your chest at the *horikā* festival gave pleasure to your eyes. ||7||

Filled with fresh *prema,* they have not had their desires fulfilled, for you were not aware of my heart filled with constant conjugal pastimes in Vraja. ||8||

Oh! Do not say, “I cannot do this since all the people of Vraja will see.” They will fulfill your desires. ||9||

[11] Until you live continually in Vraja with me, establish yourself in this way with some of the *gopīs* who are objects of your mercy. But do this secretly to cheat the cruel people. Get on your chariot alone and go quickly, so that no one will see. Going there, dress yourself as a cowherd with forest flowers and leaves. Then all will be accomplished.

[12] Saying this, anxious for the time that he also could go, he pleased Balarāma by accompanying him for a distance, and then with tears in his eyes entered his house.

[13] Balarāma went quickly on his chariot, so fast that travelers could barely see him, and finally reached the

houses on the edge of Vraja. Secretly he changed in a cowherd form suitable to his mood as a cowherd. This is described in *Hari-vaṃsa:*

> *sa praviṣṭas tu vegena taṃ vrajaṃ kṛṣṇa-pūrvajaḥ |*
> *vanyena ramaṇīyena veṣeṇālaṅkṛtaḥ prabhuḥ ||*
>
> Balarāma quickly entered Vraja dressed in attractive forest clothing. *Hari-vaṃśa* 2.46.3

[14] When Balarāma arrived, everyone gathered around and was happy to see him in cowherd dress, while longing to see Kṛṣṇa who would come later. It is understood that with Kṛṣṇa's absence they felt pained, but since the topic splits my heart, I will not speak of this.

[15] The best of the intelligent, Balarāma, understanding their longing for Kṛṣṇa, compassionately informed Nanda and others of his arrival from a distance. Understanding he had arrived, they immediately gathered around him with joyful hearts along with their families. With their showers of tears externally and their melted hearts, they softened Balarāma, holder of the plough, supporter of the earth. Affectionate Balarāma became the topic of their discussion, so that even today those words are like a lotus in the river of his fame. After a few moments when priests and others offered kind words, their sons gathered and everyone shouted blessings. They exchanged heart-felt respects, uttering Balarāṃa's and Kṛṣṇa's name. After introducing themselves, they relieved him of his travel fatigue.

[16] His parents spoke: "O Dāśārha! You bring joy to the whole universe by your powers. May you and Kṛṣṇa protect us!" Nanda and Yaśodā bathed him in their words mixed with tears like streams of nectar. ||10||

Just as he offered respect to elders like Upananda, boys like Raktaka offered respects to him in joy. Those of Balarāma's age exchanged friendship as equals. ||11||

It was Balarāma. When offered respects uttering Kṛṣṇa's name, they took him as the equivalent of Kṛṣṇa in the confusion of their joy. ||12||

[17] They took Balarāma to the house and satisfied him with fragrant water. Then, to get relief from fatigue, they had him bathe, fed him and offered him betel nut.

[18] Resting for a time in a private house, he then got up and, going through the inner chambers, came to Nanda's assembly. Nanda and others began asking about his health while shedding tears.

[19] Yaśodā said, "O Balarāma! Is your mother well? Is she taking care of you and Kṛṣṇa? Ah! If you are near me and Kṛṣṇa is near her by his will, I can experience happiness of the presence of both of you directly." ||13||

[20] Balarāma answered, "O mother! If you are near me what is the use of Rohiṇī? And if you are not near me, what is the use of Rohiṇī? Because of this, after some time I will bring Kṛṣṇa to you when the slightest opportunity arises." ||14||

[21] Nanda said, "O son! After killing all the enemies and making the Yadus happy, how many enemies remain? If you two were to come to Vraja together and we could see you as previously, we would be saved from death." ||15||

[22] He answered, "How many enemies remain for Kṛṣṇa who killed all the best warriors from Kaṃsa to Naraka? There are Paundraka, Śiśupāla, the king of Kāśī, Sālva, Jarāsandha and Dvivida." ||16||

[23] After spending the night in discussions on many topics giving joy and sorrow, thinking of the benefit of Vraja, Balarāma with great desire visited all the houses separately to meet with his friends.

[24] He met the elders, their wives, the younger cowherds and his friends, and asked how they were. They also inquired from him about his health. The mind of the gentleman is one with his relatives. ||17||

Balarāma understood that the people of Vraja, for attaining Kṛṣṇa, were without enjoyment internally but cared for the cows externally to please him. Tears gushed from his eyes. ||18||

[25] Vyāsa says:

> *viśrāntaṃ sukham āsīnaṃ papracchuḥ paryupāgatāḥ |*
> *pṛṣṭāś cānāmayaṃ sveṣu prema-gadgadayā girā |*
> *kṛṣṇe kamala-patrākṣe sannyastākhila-rādhasaḥ ||*
>
> Then, after resting, the Lord accepted a comfortable seat, and they all gathered around him. With voices faltering out of love for him, those cowherds, who had dedicated everything to lotus-eyed Kṛṣṇa, asked about the health of their dear ones in Dvārakā, and Balarāma in turn asked about the cowherds' welfare. SB 10.65.5-6

[26] When Balarāma inquired, the elders replied as follows: "Killing Kaṃsa, Kṛṣṇa freed our friends countless times and gave them great happiness. In Dvārakā you now enjoy with your wealth and sons. By those pastimes we have attained happiness. But what happiness do we get from remembering that you are there?" ||19||

[27] The younger residents said, “We had faith that today or tomorrow you two would return. We pass our time till then, maintaining our lives. Holding your feet we pray that you bring Kṛṣṇa from Dvārakā and do not go anywhere else.” ||20||

[28] His friends said, “Will you and Kṛṣṇa meet with any of us? Why do we have no attraction for the play that we had before you went to Mathurā? Our lives and the cows’ lives are now in a precarious position. Restore us so we can live and play as we did before.” ||21||

[29 - 30] The details are understood from *Hari-vaṃsa:*

taṃ ūcuḥ sthavirāḥ gopāḥ priyaṃ madhura-bhāṣiṇaḥ |
rāmaṃ ramayatāṃ śreṣṭhaṃ pravāsāt punar āgatam ||

svāgataṃ te mahā-bāho
diṣṭyā te nihatā mallāḥ kaṃsaś ca vinipātinaḥ |
ugraseno ’bhiṣiktaś ca māhātmyenānujena vai |
samudre ca śruto ’smābhis timinā saha vigrahaḥ ||

When Balarāma, the best among givers of bliss and with sweet speech, returned to Vraja from far away, the elder cowherd spoke to him. “Welcome! Your glorious brother killed the wrestlers and Kaṃsa and installed Ugrasena on the throne. We have heard that he fought with a big fish in the ocean. *Hari-vaṃśa* 2.46.6,11-12

It is also said there in the middle of the text:

pratyuvāca tato rāmaḥ sarvāṃs tān abhitaḥ sthitān |
yādaveṣv api sarveṣu bhavanto mama bāndhavāḥ || |

Balarāma answered all of the people who were around him, “Among all the Yadus, you are my friends.” *Hari-vaṃśa* 2.46.17

[31] The reciter thought to himself: “The words ‘returned from far away’ in *Hari-vaṃsa* indicate that the situation was between Balarāma and the cowherds was the same as previously, what to speak of when Kṛṣṇa would return. ‘Among all the Yadus’ (locative case) indicates ‘among all the *kṣatriya* Yadus.’ However it also can indicate difference, with the meaning of the ablative case ‘You are my friends more than the Yadus.’ Similarly one may say ‘The people of Mathurā are wealthier than the people of Sraughna.’ Some like Upananda of course were considered Yadus.”

He then spoke aloud:

Thus half the day Balarāma would speak with the elders politely, and with the juniors, with affection. He would speak with friends while laughing and holding their hands. After that he went to Nanda’s house, finished his meals and went to the assembly, making the members, as well as those outside and inside, happy by telling about the conquests of Kṛṣṇa. With Yaśodā’s permission, he then went to sleep.

But even though Balarāma played with the cowherds in Vraja, he was not happy internally, for Kṛṣṇa was his eyes and the cowherds’ eyes (for without him, they were blind). ||22||

Sad in separation from Kṛṣṇa, Balarāma simply looked at the cows in the morning and evening but did not herd them. ||23||

In the morning we will speak on another topic.

[32] Snigdhakaṇṭha thus concluded, “O Nanda! Balarāma who does not consider himself Balarāma without the presence of Kṛṣṇa, the life of all, is attached

to Kṛṣṇa and is next to you, showing affection for you.” ||24||

[33] In the assembly of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa, Snigdhakaṇṭha spoke:

When Kṛṣṇa instructed Balarāma, who was eager to go to Vraja, to pacify all the people of Vraja without mentioning the *gopīs*, Balarāma heard those instructions with tears in his eyes. “Oh! You, as if without pain, will not speak to those women whom we hear have almost died because of pains of separation?”

[34] Kṛṣṇa shyly looked at Uddhava’s face. Clever Uddhava said, “I will inform him.”

[35] Following Balarāma when he went to his room, Uddhava described to him the condition of beloved *gopīs* according to the conclusions indicated by Kṛṣṇa when Uddhava had the opportunity to go to Gokula. Leaving Balarāma, he informed Kṛṣṇa, “Balarāma, coming to Vraja, will see the intensity of the *gopīs’* madness. I have already seen this. No one can pacify them as he can. He is the proper person to bring the message.”

[36] Writing down the words from Kṛṣṇa’s mouth, Uddhava, the best of ministers, gave the letter to Balarāma. As instructed by Uddhava, Balarāma sought them out and on the third day met with them.

Seeing Balarāma, they spoke with laughter without covering their heads. Thinking of their state of madness, my life air departs from my body. ||25||

[37] I will explain their laughter:

Kṛṣṇa vowed that he would return to Vraja. The *gopīs* wondered if Kṛṣṇa would quickly return. When only Balarāma returned and was respectful, in grief, they

experienced the greatest pain, but expressed it as loud laughter. ||26||

[38] Though Kṛṣṇa did not come, the *gopīs* were not apathetic. Therefore they began speaking to Balarāma.

[39] The cause of their devotion to Balarāma may be explained as follows: “Uddhava was born in a far off place. He does not understand about us and Kṛṣṇa. But Balarāma who has been living with Kṛṣṇa since birth understands everything.” ||27||

[40] Their conversation is now described. Thinking that Kṛṣṇa had left Vraja and was enjoying his kingdom, they spoke with smiles and suggestion.

They said, “Is Kṛṣṇa enjoying nicely in Dvārakā, his capital city?” With a laugh she again asked, “Is it astonishing, since he is one man among all the city women?”

On reflecting, they then said, “First I will ask, does he ever remember his friends, his father, his mother or even his house?” ||28||

They said with detachment, “Does he sometimes remember his friends, his father, his mother or not? Our confidence turns to doubt. What is the use of our remembering him? Previously our minds wanted to ask about him. Does he remember the service we did?” ||29||

[41] Remembering the sweetness of his arms, they were temporarily bewildered. Then they began to speak again with doubtful mind:

“Breaking their love, he has rejected those who gave up father, mother, brothers, sisters, nephews, managers of the house, to worship him. But our hearts keep following

him. O best master! Why should the best of women not accept his words?” ||30||

[42] Someone else said, “If he has put us in this condition, curse him! Why do the city women with unsteady minds believe his words?”

Though she did not finish speaking, some others spoke, “Is there not some woman who can control this lots-eyed person who knows how to speak wonderful messages with incomparable sweetness?” ||31||

[43] A *gopī,* criticizing and instructing all the other *gopīs,* spoke last, “I have made all of them accept words filled with sharp arrows. A curse on me! I have said, ‘What use do we have of speaking about him? We should speak about some other pleasant subject. If he can spend his time without us, why can’t we pass our time without him?’” ||32||

When the *gopīs’* hearts became hard, they remembered his smile, walk, speech, glance and embrace and began crying. ||33||

[44] Balarāma, most compassionate, stunned like an immobile pole, with tears streaming from his red eyes, remained bewildered about what to do for a moment.

[45] Calling them mothers, offering them praise, indicating various disturbances which caused Kṛṣṇa’s delay in coming, frightening them by saying that Kṛṣṇa would permanently faint on hearing of their pain, Balarāma, with various conciliatory words spoke to them:

Just as I have strong affection for Kṛṣṇa since childhood, I have strong affection for you. I swear this is true. O

wives of my brother! I should not burn the heart of my brother with the embers lying in my heart. ||34||

Knowing Kṛṣṇa's heart, I have come to Vraja. Knowing his heart deeply, I speak to you with consoling words. If I knew he was indifferent, I would not be able to do this or to speak with you. I would not be satisfied with him. ||35||

Staying in Dvārakā, my brother has given liberation to the enemies. Ah! I do not accept it when you say he has given you up, for, desiring him, you gave up local *dharma*, and without attachment to your houses, desire to give up your bodies immediately. ||36||

So much is he controlled by your qualities that he sent me to you though I am elder, to please you. His messages are most attractive. By them you will gain happiness. If not, the message writer himself will come. ||37||

[46] May his letter give you happiness!

All the messages that I sent after leaving are full of promises that I will return. I have sent Uddhava as my emissary to speak these messages. Ah! Fearing great obstacles in this attempt, I have instructed and sent Balarāma. But my intelligence is shamed by your intelligence. ||38||

If I make myself a liar, to hell with me! How can I make the greatest gentleman Uddhava a liar? Let that be! But how can I make Balarāma, famous as the greatest among the great, a liar? Dear *gopīs*! My words cannot be untrue. ||39||

I am residing close to you. The proof is that I am present in both Dvārakā and Vraja. If not, both places could not

be perfect. Since I am most anxious, quickly killing the remaining seven or eight enemies of the devotees, I will come to Vraja in seven or eight days. ||40||

[47] The conciliation is described in *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*:

> *sandeśaiḥ sāma-madhuraiḥ prema-garbhair agarvitaiḥ |*
> *rāmeṇāśvāsitā gopyaḥ kṛṣṇasyāti-manoharaiḥ ||*
>
> Balarāma pacified all the *gopīs* of Kṛṣṇa by his attractive message, sweet with conciliation, which was full of *prema* and without pride. *Viṣṇu Purāṇa* 5.24.20

This is stated in summary in the *Bhāgavatam:*

The Supreme Lord Balarāma, the attractor of all, being expert at various kinds of conciliation, consoled the *gopīs* by relaying to them the confidential messages Kṛṣṇa had sent with him. These messages deeply touched the *gopīs'* hearts. SB 10.65.16

[48 - 49] Hearing this, the *gopīs,* experiencing that they had attained Kṛṣṇa by the power of the message, on another day, revealed a message though a confidante with embarrassment:

"We accept your words that you will bring Kṛṣṇa. If you accept all my associates, these thin-bodied *gopīs,* who saved their youthful bodies till now for you, rejecting all enjoyment, and who remain in their houses with sick bodies, then I will keep these women near me. You should go and bring your younger brother."

[50] Balarāma, accepting the message, said, "Knowing that we must console you now, and though we should do this, which has not yet been done, I desire to take permission from the elders."

[51] Hearing the desire to ask the elders' permission some women then spoke: "The elders, fearing

contamination by having made us marry someone else, knowing that our actions are ardently dedicated to Kṛṣṇa alone with our body mind and words, have become depressed. They will beg you to bring Kṛṣṇa.”

[52] Consenting to their request, with this on his mind, he went to Nanda’s house. Rādhā and the other *gopīs* through an assistant, having taken shelter of Yaśodā, went to the elders to request that Balarāma should accept the young unmarried *gopīs*. The elders then requested Balarāma to do this, through a messenger.

[53] They requested him several times, “Though it is not proper at this time, I act according to your wish. But until my brother comes to Vraja, I cannot accept marriage with great celebration.” The elders were happy and accepted this.

[54] Then Balarāma, accepting all the women according to Gāndharva rites, in a pleasant isolated grove, north of attractive Bhāṇḍira forest, he married them. There the Yamunā flowed at a distance. When he wanted to divide up the river into a thousand streams, Yamunā manifested her stubborn nature. Balarāma pulled her in order to bring her close. This gave joy to the people of Vraja. On being pulled by Balarāma, Yamunā glorified him.

[55] The *sakhīs* then inquired from Snigdhakaṇṭha, “Yamunā became the wife of Kṛṣṇa and went to Dvārakā. Then who was this?”

[56] Snigdhakaṇṭha said, “Just as Chāyā is the second form of Saṃjñā (wife of the sun god), this river is a second form of Yamunā who is with Kṛṣṇa in Dvārakā. Balarāma spoke to Yamunā when he pulled her, ‘O beautiful woman! Of daughter of the ocean! This is my order.’” (Hari-vaṃśa 2.46.51)

[57] The speaker thought to himself:

How did the *gopīs* develop attraction for Balarāma, when they usually had attraction for Kṛṣṇa? Let that question be. Some unintelligent people, not knowing the conclusions mentioned in *Bhāgavatam,* discuss this topic uselessly, thinking that Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma had affection for the same *gopīs,* though the word *gopī* is used with different meanings at different times. The *gopīs* of Kṛṣṇa, though distracted because of their state of madness, said to Balarāma, “Is Kṛṣṇa, the darling of the city women, living happily?” By this evidence from the *Bhāgavatam,* speaking about Kṛṣṇa, the *gopīs* state that their happiness arises from Kṛṣṇa’s and his friends’ happiness.

[58] Kṛṣṇa’s *gopīs* said, “Does he remember our services?” (SB 10.65.10) This means “We become successful if he remembers our service.”

[59] They said to Balarāma, “For Kṛṣṇa’s sake, O descendant of Dāśārha, we abandoned our mothers, fathers, brothers, husbands, children and sisters, even though these family relations are difficult to give up.” (SB 10.65.11)They reveal that they gave up mothers and fathers for his sake. They spoke to Balarāma, older that Kṛṣṇa and the *gopīs* and established that they were dedicated only to Kṛṣṇa.

[60] They said, “But now, O Lord, that same Kṛṣṇa has suddenly abandoned us and gone away, breaking off all affectionate ties with us.” (SB 10.65.12) By this they indicate that their affection for him can never be broken.

[61] They said, “How could any woman fail to trust his promises?” (SB 10.65.12) They indicate that he has

attraction for other women though they are dedicated only to him with intense love.

[62] They said, “How can intelligent city women possibly trust the words of one whose heart is so unsteady and who is so ungrateful?” (SB 10.65.13) They show Kṛṣṇa’s unsteady and ungrateful mind and confirm their steady faithfulness to him.

[63] They said, “They must believe him because he speaks so wonderfully and also because his beautiful smiling glances arouse their lust.” (SB 10.65.13) By this they indicate that their hearts have been stolen by him.

[64] They said, “Why bother talking about him, dear *gopī*? Please talk of something else. If he passes his time without us, then we shall similarly pass ours.” (SB 10.65.14) By this they show determination to make themselves hard-hearted since they are overcome with great suffering from separation.

[65] “While speaking these words, the young cowherd women remembered Śauri’s laughter, his pleasing conversations with them, his attractive glances, his style of walking and his loving embraces. Thus they began to cry.” (SB 10.65.15) By Śukadeva’s words which produce all happiness, it is understood that their bodies had become liquid by submersion in the ocean of affection for Kṛṣṇa. Thus it is only fools who think that these *gopīs* could develop attachment for Balarāma.

[66] Their dedication to Kṛṣṇa alone is revealed also on their trip to Kurukṣetra. The first and last verses of their statement are given here:

> While gazing at their beloved Kṛṣṇa, the young *gopīs* used to condemn the creator of their eyelids, which would momentarily block their vision of him. Now,

> seeing Kṛṣṇa again after such a long separation, with their eyes they took him into their hearts, and there they embraced him to their full satisfaction. In this way they became totally absorbed in ecstatic meditation on him, although those who constantly practice mystic yoga find such absorption difficult to achieve. SB 10.82.39
>
> Dear Lord, whose navel is just like a lotus flower, your lotus feet are the only shelter for those who have fallen into the deep well of material existence. Your feet are worshiped and meditated upon by great mystic yogīs and highly learned philosophers. We wish that these lotus feet may also be awakened within our hearts, although we are only ordinary persons engaged in household affairs. SB 10.82.48

Their full dedication to Kṛṣṇa is indicated in Kṛṣṇa's conversation with Uddhava. The first and last verses spoken by Kṛṣṇa are given here:

> The residents of Vṛndāvana, headed by the *gopīs,* were always completely attached to me with deepest love. Therefore, when my uncle Akrūra brought my brother Balarāma and me to the city of Mathurā, the residents of Vṛndāvana suffered extreme mental distress because of separation from me and could not find any other source of happiness. SB 11.12.10
>
> All those hundreds of thousands of *gopīs,* understanding me to be their most charming lover and ardently desiring me in that way, were unaware of my actual position. Yet by intimately associating with me, the *gopīs* attained me, the Supreme Absolute Truth. SB 11.12.13

Moreover Balarāma acted in this way:

saṅkarṣaṇas tāḥ kṛṣṇasya sandeśair hṛdayaṅgamaiḥ |
sāntvayām āsa bhagavān nānānunaya-kovidaḥ ||

The Supreme Lord Balarāma, the attractor of all, being expert at various kinds of conciliation, consoled the *gopīs* by relaying to them the confidential messages Kṛṣṇa had sent with him. These messages deeply touched the *gopīs'* hearts. SB 10.65.16

The words of Kṛṣṇa should be considered the most effective means of consoling the *gopīs* for those words were accepted to have come from his heart. Balarāma was "expert at various kinds of conciliation." However Balarāma, described by these words, should be accepted as the secondary conciliator. Though Balarāma is Bhagavān who is expert at conciliation, he should be understood to be secondary as Bhagavān. Therefore speaking of Balarāma as having attraction for Kṛṣṇa's *gopī* is foolish. Those who are diligent should see these proofs which have been supplied.

[67] Though the word *gopī* is commonly used, the word *gopī (*Kṛṣṇa's beloveds) in this context should not be taken to mean other women. The word is used to refer to Kṛṣṇa's mother and others in the following examples from *Bhāgavatam:*

The *gopī* wives of the cowherd men were very pleased to hear that mother Yaśodā had given birth to a son. SB 10.5.9

The *gopīs* first executed the process of *ācamana,* drinking a sip of water from the right hand. SB 10.6.21

Having long suffered the anxiety of separation, the cowherd men and their wives (*gopīs*) embraced Balarāma. The Lord then offered respects to his

> parents, and they joyfully greeted him with prayers. SB 10.65.2
>
> Neither Lord Brahmā, nor Lord Śiva, nor even the goddess of fortune, who is always the better half of the Supreme Lord, can obtain from the Supreme Personality of Godhead, the deliverer from this material world, such mercy as received by mother Yaśodā (*gopī*). SB 10.9.20

Nor should one take all of these statements about *gopīs* to mean that they were all Kṛṣṇa's lovers. Similarly, in the Fifth Canto (5.11.12-13), there are contiguous statements (verses 12-13) with the word *kṣetra-jña*, but the word means *jīva* in the first instance and God in the second instance.

Some people think that since Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma are both Bhagavān and have no difference there is no fault if they have the same *gopī* lovers. But then there would the fault of both of them enjoying the same queens at Dvārakā. Balarāma is not like Uddhava and is certainly not like Kṛṣṇa. Some will say that they pacify the *gopīs* as the Supreme Lord and that there is no difference. But this is not suitable for pacifying the *gopīs.* Thinking in this way, the idea of non-difference cannot be accepted.

Anyway, for two months continually Balarāma enjoyed pastimes with thousands of *gopīs* other than Kṛṣṇa's, showing bold actions such as pulling Yamunā. Coming to give joy to Nanda and the others, he nourished their bliss. How could he do anything despicable? But what is the use of speaking of the harsh words of disputers who spoil the respect of the most honorable women?

[68] The reciter then concluded, giving happiness to the members of the assembly. "Let the previous talk be! It is

astonishing! Please examine it carefully. Even in meeting Kṛṣṇa there is a glimmer of separation.” ||41||

[69] When the understanding of union had arisen and all were happy, as on previous days, everyone returned home. Kṛṣṇa and Rādhā in great joy went to their abode of enchantment.

Chapter Twenty-one

Punishing Pauṇḍraka

[1] The next day Madhukaṇṭha spoke at Nanda's assembly lit by Kṛṣṇa's moon-like face:

Balarāma stayed in Vraja for Caitra and Vaiśakha months, giving happiness to those who saw and heard him, observing all the festivals according to his pleasure. He then asked to go to Dvārakā and was given permission.

Among the messengers who came and went during his stay, two came and said, "When Pauṇḍraka began causing disturbance, Kṛṣṇa killed the uncivilized fellow as well as the king of Kāśī."

[2] When Nanda and others became alarmed Balarāma said, "Please tell us the story."

[3] The two messengers said:

When you came here, one person from the king of Karuṣa, lacking all *dharma*, came into the Sudharma assembly to see Kṛṣṇa served by the Yadus. The ignorant fellow did not get any obstruction. Since he was a *brāhmaṇa,* the door keepers did not prevent him. He approached and said, "I have arrived. I have been sent by the *ātmā,* Paramātmā Vāsudeva who is served by the knowers of the Vedas."

[4] Thinking he was an imposter everyone laughed and with astonishment said, “If he is known as the *ātmā* how is he to be known also as Paramātmā? Please explain.”

[5] The *brāhmaṇa* said with anger, “Ah! You do not know that Paramātmā who has appeared as Pauṇḍraka and is confirmed as such by the learned.”

[6] Balarāma said with laughter and red eyes “Then what happened?”

[7] The messengers said:

The *brāhmaṇas* in the assembly said, “O *brāhmaṇa*! How can those who are equal to Bṛhaspati say such nonsense? They are like the rising sun. What more can be said? They know everything completely.”

[8] Kṛṣṇa offered respects to the arrogant, quarrelsome *brāhmaṇa* by his words. “Let that be. Please reveal the message.”

[9] The brāhmaṇa said:

What is said in the message has been stated by the powerful master:

I am the one and only Lord Vāsudeva, and there is no other. It is I who have descended to this world to show mercy to the living beings. Therefore give up your false name. O Sātvata, give up my personal symbols, which out of foolishness you now carry, and come to me for shelter. If you do not, then you must give me battle.” SB 10.66.5-6

[10] Gripped with laughter, Balarāma said, “Then what happened?”

[11] The two messengers said, “When Ugrasena and the others began looking at the *brāhmaṇa* with angry

glances for a long time, he twisted his limbs with a loud, crooked laugh.”

[12] Kṛṣṇa again said, “Previously I was known by the name Vāsudeva. How can I separate myself from that name?”

[13] Some said with derision, “Who knows this? He should now be in possession of his conch and *cakra*.”

[14] Stopping them with angry affection, Kṛṣṇa, embarrassed, spoke with smile, “Ah! O comedians, give up your laughter. Best of *brāhmaṇas*! Please listen. His symbols are visibly with him. If he has the real symbols and I have stolen the symbols, the stolen symbols must be false. Let that be. I will send him the symbols, but I should give them directly. He should accept them in person with great care. He should be eager to come and face me. By that, he will gain land, and the earth will prosper. He will rest peacefully with a great sigh of relief.”

[15] Balarāma said with a smile “Then what happened?”

[16 - 17] The messengers said, “The messenger was dumbfounded by the power concealed in Kṛṣṇa’s words. Thinking his endeavors useless, the messenger left and, telling Pauṇḍraka what had happened, made Pauṇḍraka’s’ face turn pale. Kṛṣṇa went to Kāśī and Karuṣa to have some fun. He met with five *akṣauhiṇīs* belonging to Pauṇḍraka and the king of Kāśī.”

[18] Balarāma said, “Then what happened?”

[19] The messengers said, “Seeing Pauṇḍraka dressed like an actor in bad imitation of the Lord, Kṛṣṇa simply laughed uncontrollably and was the covered by showers of the enemy’s weapons.” ||1||

[20] Nanda was not even able to say, “What happened next?” The messengers continued speaking on their own:

When the weapons reached the half-way point, Kṛṣṇa released his weapons and demolished the opponents. || 2||

He released arrows like Garuḍas and received arrows as if they were merely air. The arrows of Kṛṣṇa seemed to dance during the battle. ||3||

In the beginning, the enemy field was covered with troops, horses and elephants. In the end,

it was covered with jackals, vultures, crows and ghosts. ||4||

[21] Having defeated all the enemies, Kṛṣṇa began praising Pauṇḍraka with sarcastic words.

I have come according to your order to offer the weapons to you, the king of the three worlds. I have destroyed all those false, mock fighters. Now please carefully take the weapons. Saying this, he shot more arrows and shattered Pauṇḍraka’s chariot into a thousand pieces. He then threw the *cakra,* which beheaded him. This amused everyone.

[22] The king of Kāśī, already dead, did not have time to glance around to see when Kṛṣṇa would cut off his head with his arrows.

[23] The people of Kāśī came in huge numbers. They set eyes on his head as it landed.

His sons, grandsons, great grandsons, daughters, brothers, wives and others said, “Is that a lotus falling from heaven? It is mine, it is mine.” On seeing that it was the head of the king of Kāśī, severed by the weapons

released by Kṛṣṇa, the head became a thunderbolt, giving pain to all. ||5||

[24] Balarāma said with a laugh, “Then what happened?”

[25] The messengers said, “Then Kṛṣṇa went to Dvārakā.”

[26] On another day when two other messengers arrived, the same incident was described.

[27] Balarāma said, “That was excellently done, since two demons were killed. But did he not kill their offspring, according to the saying ‘One should not keep the remains of fire, sickness or enemies.’?”

[28 - 29] The messengers said, “O Lord! Listen to this. Not wanting to kill them out of hatred, he destroyed their cities. The son of the king of Kāśī named Sudakṣiṇa, seeing his father killed with head turned down, began to worship Śiva. When Śiva revealed himself to the son, the son did not say that Kṛṣṇa was the enemy. He only said that he had an enemy. Taking the son’s request to be useless, Śiva hinted with a smile, ‘All you have is like ashes.’ He then said, ‘The Dakṣiṇa fire worshiped with many *brāhmaṇas* will fulfill your desires, if you are considering killing an offender of *brāhmaṇas*.” Saying this, he then said, ‘If you want to kill those who respect *brāhmaṇas,* the fire will destroy all the *brāhmaṇas* you employed.’”

[30] Balarāma said, “Then what happened?”

[31] The messengers said, “The fool then worshiped the Dakṣiṇa fire in order to kill people who respect *brāhmaṇas.* By the worship, the fire became hot with flames, and began growing into a form of Śiva with matted locks of hair. The fire went to Dvārakā and began

causing violence. The agitated attendants of Śiva ran in front and behind. The fire emanated streams of lightning between his eyebrows, eyes showering fire, protruding teeth, a harsh face with a frown, and a sharp tongue which licked the edges of his lips. He was naked. The rays from his trident pierced all the directions. His legs were like *tāla* trees. He shook the whole earth and traversed the path of Śiva's attendants. With his glance of inexhaustible light that man of fire burned all the trees wherever he looked." ||6 - 7||

[32] Nanda said in fear, "Then what happened?"

[33] The messengers said, "The people of Dvārakā were terrified on seeing close up the burning caused by this fiery person. Kṛṣṇa, absorbed in playing dice with his friends, ignored the creature. Ordered by Kṛṣṇa, his *cakra* made the fiery creature flee and then destroyed Kāśī. Then gently the *cakra* came back to Kṛṣṇa's feet." ||8||

[34] Balarāma said, "Describe a little more."

[35] The messengers said, "The fire in front of the *cakra* appeared remarkable. It appeared that fire flies were fleeing in fear from a host of suns causing universal destruction. Some of the attendants of Śiva who came to burn Dvārakā were burned by the Dakṣiṇa fire and some were burned by the fire of the *cakra.* The fire quickly entered Kāśī and burned Sudakṣiṇa and the priests. The *cakra* burned them all, and burned the city. Kāśī was burned by the *cakra.* Do not think otherwise. The whole province along with the city was burned by the sparks from the fire." ||9 - 12||

[36] Everyone said with laughter, "That was a very good since Akrūra was no longer living there."

[37] Balarāma said with a laugh, “Then what happened?”

[38] The messengers said, “The *cakra* which became the sun at the time of final destruction on departing became like the moon on returning to Kṛṣṇa.” ||13||

[39] Balarāma said, “What happened to the person who claimed he was a *brāhmaṇa* and spoke harsh words?”

[40] The messengers said with a laugh, “He went to the dancing arena of the Dakṣiṇa fire.”

[41] Everyone said with laughter, “If the *brāhmaṇa* was burned by the fire of sin, whose fault is that? It is proper to show anger at those who sent the fire to Kṛṣṇa’s invincible fortress.”

[42] Seeing that Balarāma’s face had become eager to help Kṛṣṇa on hearing of these events, Nanda then spoke. “Seeing you many times, I thought I was seeing Kṛṣṇa. Now your mind is disturbed. I know you are Kṛṣṇa’s protector.” ||14||

[43] Balarāma spoke with tears in his eyes, “If my body sees you, my father, and Kṛṣṇa to be the same, let it remain whole. But if it sees you and him as different, then let it be split in two. (I cannot be separated from either of you.)” ||15||

Making this promise, Balarāma desired to go. All the people of Vraja gathered to see him off. Seeing his pleasing love for them, they shed tears for two *muhūrtas.* Yaśodā constantly embraced him, and though wanting to give instructions for Kṛṣṇa and Rohiṇī, she could say nothing. She entered into a state of the highest communication (where nothing need be said).

[44] What more can be said? Though the condition of intense fever of separation felt by his father, mother,

friends and all people of Vraja had to be told to Kṛṣṇa, Balarāma felt useless in this endeavor and withered in shame. ||16||

The *gopīs* felt both happiness and suffering when Balarāma went, because of the promise that he would bring Kṛṣṇa back, and because of separation from Balarāma. ||17||

Gokula was behind and Dvārakā where Kṛṣṇa resided was far ahead. Balarāma, considering the distance between to be empty of space, reached Dvārakā in one day. ||18||

[45] I accept what *Hari-vaṃśa* says in this regard:

Hearing that he had arrived, Kṛṣṇa came with Uddhava and met Balarāma who was covered in perspiration. Taking him to a private place, with tears in his eyes and full of longing, he asked him about prosperity of Vraja. ||19||

What more can be said? First he asked about his mother and father and then about others. He asked his brother about the forest plants and animals. Relieved, he then decided that he must go to Vraja. May what he said about each person give us blessings of protection! ||20||

[46] *Hari-vaṃśa* has these verses:

tathaivādhvanyaveṣeṇa sopaśliṣṭo janārdanam |
pratyagra-vana-mālena vakṣasābhivirājatā ||
sa dṛṣṭvā tūrṇam āyāntaṃ rāmaṃ lāṅgala-dhāriṇam |
sahasotthāya govindo dadāv āsanam uttamam ||
upaviṣṭaṃ tadā rāmaṃ papraccha kuśalaṃ vraje |
bāndhaveṣu ca sarveṣu goṣu caiva janārdanaḥ ||
pratyuvāca tato rāmo bhrātaraṃ sādhu-bhāṣiṇam |
sarveṣāṃ kuśalaṃ kṛṣṇa yeṣāṃ kuśalam icchasi ||

> Balarāma, still wearing a traveler’s dress, beautiful with a new garland on his chest, embraced Kṛṣṇa. Seeing Balarāma coming quickly, Kṛṣṇa rose and offered him an excellent seat. Seeing him, Kṛṣṇa asked him about the welfare of all his friends and the cows. Balarāma answered his brother who spoke sweetly, “O Kṛṣṇa! All those for whose good health you desire, are fine.” *Hari-vaṃśa* 2.46.56-59|

[47] Kṛṣṇa thus understood that all the people of Vraja were fine. Kṛṣṇa then became absorbed in another way: he drank all the milk and fruit that Balarāma brought and began to recollect the names of all the cows. ||21||

[48] Madhukaṇṭha concluded: “O Nanda! How can the words of Kṛṣṇa be untrue? How can the words of Balarāma be untrue? See! Your son, dressed in fine clothing, respecting all of Vraja, is in front of you with Balarāma, cooling your chest.” ||22||

[49] The bards of Vraja then sang:

Smiling, you spoke words with double meaning to Pauṇḍraka. You showed skill in replying to the talkative messenger.

You were eager to see the costume of your enemy. Your voice sounded like a host of conches.

Going in glee, you surveyed his province. You were preoccupied with seeing him.

You destroyed all the troops he gathered and then faced Pauṇḍraka directly.

Seeing his costume, you scolded him sarcastically. You threw your *cakra* to return it to him.

You cut off his head in the battle. You also killed his friend the king of Kāśī, using iron arrows.

Cutting off the head of the king of Kāśī, you destroyed Kāśī, thus destroying the enemy completely.

Returning to Dvārakā, you played dice with your friends. Hearing about the demon that his son sent, you laughed and continued playing.

Ordering your *cakra* to go, you continued to play dice. Defeated by your friend you were ashamed.

You defeated all of the son's black magic and after the *cakra* burned Kāśī, it returned to you.

Giving up Dvārakā to which you quickly returned, you now shine in Vraja, O lord of Vṛndāvana! ||23||

[50] After completing the talk in the outer assembly, the reciter slightly satisfied the hearts of Rādhā, Kṛṣṇa and others in the inner assembly.

[51] In leaving, Balarāma felt that he had not personally consoled Kṛṣṇa's beloved *gopīs.* After spending another night on some pretext, the next morning he carefully went ahead of the crowd following him and met those lamenting *gopīs* on a forest path to comfort them completely (telling them that he would definitely return with Kṛṣṇa). He told his own *gopīs* to live in Vraja following the orders of Kṛṣṇa's beloved *gopīs.* Taking permission from the intelligent, who accepted his consolation with the conclusion that it was necessary to go periodically to his father's house, he left. When he left, the *gopīs* gave him a gift for Kṛṣṇ–a *śuka* and *śārika* bird which they had taught to speak:

[52] They taught the parrot:

You should maintain your lives until I return. The *cātaka* bird remains alive until the monsoon comes. ||24||

They taught the *śārika* bird:

Waiting for the monsoon, the *cātaka* birds remain alive. If the monsoon is devoid of clouds, how can the suffering *cātaka* birds remain alive? ||25||

[53] Balarāma brought many gifts from Vraja and Kṛṣṇa for many days would enjoy them until finally they were finished. But the parrot and śā*rika* bird taught by his beloved *gopīs* never ceased to teach him thirst and attraction for Vraja in his heart. ||26||

[54] Madhukaṇṭha concluded, “O Rādhā! You and Kṛṣṇa together shine radiantly. Seeing your embrace, with no feelings of separation, I attain bliss.” ||27||

[55] Thus giving bliss to all, after the two reciters retired to their rooms, Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa slept in their house which was filled with bliss.

Part Three: Kṛṣṇa Returns to Vraja

Chapter Twenty-two

Destruction of Dvivida

O Kṛṣṇa! O Caitanya! Of Rūpa and Sanātana! O Gopāla! O Raghunātha! O Vallabha who has attained Vraja! Please protect me! ||1||

[1] In this way, Uddhava and Balarāma gave great bliss to Vraja. The First and Second Campus have been written to show (ultimately) Kṛṣṇa's return to Vraja after killing Dantavakra. In order to establish this with proof, the section called *Kṛṣna-pūrṇa-vraja* will now be offered. [10] The two reciters described this pastime after his return to Vraja just as they described his other pastimes.

[2] Snigdhakaṇṭha began speaking at Nanda's assembly in the presence of Kṛṣṇa, the prince of Vraja.

In this way the two pastimes (of Uddhava and Balarāma visiting Vraja) have been described. In those pastimes Uddhava and Balarāma, like the divine physicians, the Aśvini-kumāras, alleviated the disease of Vraja's separation from Kṛṣṇa as if by a medicine. This was not untrue.

When Balarāma pacified Vraja by revealing that Kṛṣṇa would return and then returned to Dvārakā, the people of Vraja had even greater desire for Kṛṣṇa, just as *cātaka* birds cannot control themselves at the approach of the monsoon season. ||2||

Like a person struck with debilitating disease craves water, the people of Vraja tasted water in the form of

Kṛṣṇa through the device of his *sphūrti* presented by Balarāma. They constantly derived great happiness from that *sphūrti* and that happiness was not false since their happiness was never obstructed, though their longing for attaining Kṛṣṇa remained. ||3||

[3] When the hope that Balarāma gave them spread everywhere, after some days, as previously, two messengers arrived from Dvārakā and spoke: “Desiring Kṛṣṇa’s quick return to Vraja, Balarāma personally began to destroy the obstacles by fighting victorious with great boldness. Please hear the story of killing Dvivida.”

[4] Nanda said, “Who is the enemy known as Dvivida?”

[5] The messengers said, “This king of the monkeys acted as a commander in Rāma’s army.”

[6] Nanda said, “How was this prideless servant of Rāma killed because of excessive arrogance by Balarāma?”

[7] The messengers said, “At this time, Dvivida became inimical by association with the demon Naraka.”

[8] Nanda said, “I cannot think how association of a great devotee with the demon Naraka could cause such damage.”

[9] The messengers said, “Association with the wicked was certainly the cause of his hatred for Balarāma also. During Rāma’s time he also had hostility towards Lakṣmaṇa.”

[10] Nanda said, “It is hard to understand the real nature of Rāma’s associates. Let that be. Please describe the misconduct of this person who destroyed his service to Rāma and Lakṣmaṇa.”

[11] The messengers said, “When Naraka died, to help him, Dvivida came to Kṛṣṇa’s province. Throwing fire,

water and mountains in all directions, he destroyed cities, towns and cowherd villages. He put men and women in caves and sealed them in with stones. He destroyed women's chastity and devastated the sages' hermitages and contaminated them with his stool and urine. In this way the ape gave suffering to Kṛṣṇa's province and destroyed it whimsically. " ||4 - 5||

[12] Nanda said, "Then what happened?"

[13] The messengers said:

Near Dvārakā at Raivata Mountain, Dvivida heard Balarāma's pleasant music. When he came there, by shaking the trees he destroyed flowers, fruits and branches of the trees. He imitated Balarāma's singing by uttering, "*Kila, kila, kila*." Balarāma's women laughed at him. When he saw them, he sported with them as apes would do. What else can be said?

Understanding that Dvivida was an associate of Rāma, Balarāma tolerated everything. When Dvivida showed impudence a thousand times, Balarāma killed him. ||6||

Though he killed him, I think he was merciful, for he liberated him from his various offenses. ||7||

[14] The fight:

Balarāma threw stones at him but Dvivida dodged them and became gentle for a moment when he drank some stolen liquor. He then disgracefully pulled at the clothing of the women. Because of his ungracious actions, Balarāma took up his plough and pestle. Dvivida attacked with *sāla* trees and Balarāma, enraged with a fighting spirit, threw his pestle. Dvivida became covered in blood. Balarāma looked at him with pleasure. Dvivida threw a *sāla* tree. Balarāma broke the tree and when he

threw another one, Balarāma broke that one also. Dvivida threw a shower of stones and Balarāma released his pestle, shattered all the stones and propelled them in the opposite direction. Dvivida attacked Balarāma with his fists and Balarāma attacked him with his fists. Dvivida died and Balarāma was successful. The battle displayed the successive moves and countermoves of Dvivida and Balarāma one after the other. The immovable earth began to tremble when the two grappled with each other during the fight. ||8||

[15] When the two messengers had finished speaking, two travelers from Dvārakā arrived and spoke, “Please hear of another astonishing act of Balarāma. Having gone to Hastināpura he treated the city like an object to be thrown away.”

[16] Everyone said in astonishment, “What is that? Please tell us the news.”

[17] The messengers said:

The son of Jāmbavatī, Sāmba, decided to get married and stole the daughter of Duryodhana by himself. When he did so, Śālva, Bhuriśrava, Duryodhana and Karṇa became red with rage, and even Bhīṣma took a frightful stance. Coming together with great force, they captured Sāmba, the best of heroes, conqueror of warriors, the sun of the Yadu family.

[18] Hearing that he was tied up from Nārada, the Yadus lost control and gathered their armies. Desiring auspiciousness for the Kurus, Balarāma went to their city with the intention of pacifying them with good instructions.

[19] Thinking of the future pleasure, Kṛṣṇa did not speak at all at that time.

[20] Balarāma camped in a garden half a *krośa* from Hastināpura along with an assembly of many *brāhmaṇas.* Through Uddhava he sent a faultless message to them. Thinking that Balarāma had come to release Sāmba, they quickly went to Balarāma to pray for their well-being. Approaching him, to show that they respected him, they announced, “Please order us what to do.”

[21] Balarāma thought to himself: “If I arrange this marriage, then they will have an affectionate relationship with Kṛṣṇa. I should maintain a favorable attitude to these enemies in order to understand if this is possible. They are following me with respect, thinking I am their friend but they consider Kṛṣṇa, the jewel of my heart, to be among their enemies. Enough of acting favorable to them! They do not give up our child but imprison him like an enemy! What Kṛṣṇa has said is true. It is useless to treat them like this. Therefore I should not speak pacifying words to them but rather speak harshly. As the Vedas should not be spoken to *śūdras,* Kṛṣṇa’s name should not be spoken to them. I will use Ugrasena’s name.”

[22] Then Balarāma spoke aloud, “I have come as a messenger, and thus cannot give orders. Ugrasena can give the order.”

[23] Nanda said, “Then what happened?”

[24] The messengers said:

When they looked at each other, in front of Balarāma, who looked like death, the Kurus became angry in their hearts. Balarāma then spoke frankly, “Listen to his order. Our innocent boy follows the correct *dharma* of *kṣatriyas.* You have fought a battle unworthy of a *kṣatriya*, showing great anger since you together have

fought one person. Sāmba, who has stolen your daughter single-handedly, is the greatest of warriors. You should not unjustly tie him up unless you do not consider my teachings. Let that be. Today, you should follow proper conduct.”

[25] Nanda said, “Then what happened?”

[26] The messengers said:

When they heard this, the Kurus turned pale but quickly began speaking unspeakable words.

Though some like Bhīṣma and others turned pale because of the heat caused by offense to Kṛṣṇa, they did not protest the offensive speaking because they were overpowered by their intense warrior natures. Not only did they demean the Yadus, and not only did they show hatred to Ugrasena, but they disrespected Balarāma as well, and then returned to the city. But how could Balarāma tolerate it when they insulted Kṛṣṇa with arrogance? From a distance Balarāma ordered Duryodhana, “O Duryodhana! If you do not worship Kṛṣṇa, you will not live much longer.”

[27] Nanda said, “Then what happened?”

[28] The messengers said, “When they spoke to the Yadus in this demeaning way, Balarāma desired to demean their city.” ||9||

[29] Nanda said, “Then what happened?”

[30] The messengers said:

When they spoke sarcastic words like the utterances of Buddha against the Vedas, looking at them with disrespect, Balarāma began pulling the city with all its palaces in order to throw it in the Gaṅgā.

Balarāma, laughing loudly, dug his plough into the earth to pull the city toward the Gaṅgā while its attractive sides were being attacked by fierce troops. Creating friction by the movement which made a loud noise "*hala hala*" he caused joy to spread in the whole universe and made the enemy shed showers of tears. ||10||

When the front part of the city began to sink and the opposite side rose, the citizens began cursing Duryodhana and his sons. With their heads bowed in shame, they brought Sāmba with the young maiden forward and surrendered to Balarāma. Balarāma, glancing at them with compassion, began giving them instructions. ||11||

[31] "Oh best of the Kurus! You should never do such wicked acts." Duryodhana, gaining his senses, worshiped Balarāma along with the citizens in fear. Bringing a huge dowry and placing it in front of Balarāma, he requested him to depart with the bride and groom. Sāmba, being embarrassed, requested to have a fair fight with each of the Kurus in front of Balarāma. He did not speak of Lakṣmaṇā. At this, the worried Kurus touched their turbans and crowns to Balarāma's feet and prayed for his mercy (that Sāmba accept the bride)."

[32] Nanda said, "Why did Bhīṣma, the follower of Kṛṣṇa, support the sinful? And why did Balarāma not completely destroy their city seeing the opportunity?"

[33] The messengers said, "Bhīṣma knew in his heart the real truth but followed the principles of a *kṣatriya.* Balarāma began to drag the city into the river in order to purify the Kurus by instilling fear in them, but not to kill them."

[34] Nanda said, "Then what happened?"

[35] The messengers said, “Joyfully Balarāma took Sāmba and his bride to Dvārakā and related the events to Kṛṣṇa. Kṛṣṇa simply smiled. He did this to indicate that he understood their hearts and that Balarāma was correct.”

[36] Snigdhakaṇṭha concluded, “By your request I have recited this. It is not like that now. O Nanda! Look at Kṛṣṇa, whose eyes bestow bliss, sitting beside you.” || 12||

[37] When, having satisfied everyone, the reciter remained silent for a few moments, the bards of Vraja began singing:

You became angry at Dvivida’s evil nature. You are the friend of the devotees. You performed pastimes at Raivata that the ordinary people could not see.

You were served by your women and became angered by the boldness of the ape. You fought with him and enjoyed it thoroughly.

You killed the evilest of the apes after a long time and were praised by the *devatās* and sages. When the Kurus bound up Sāmba, you gathered the Yadu troops.

Trying to make peace, you went in the company of many *brāhmaṇas.* Hastening to Hastināpura, you heard their nasty words.

Looking at their city, in anger you pulled their city using your plough and created astonishment in all.

Frightened, the Kurus surrendered to your feet and mercifully you gave up the quarrel. You returned to Dvārakā joyfully with the bride, groom and dowry.

Now you are living with your younger brother in Vraja. Victory! Victory! Victory! O Balarāma, the only bliss for your brother! ||13||

[38] Then at the assembly of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa, the reciter made them happy. He spoke as follows:

As long as Balarāma was with Kṛṣṇa after returning from Gokula, Kṛṣṇa engaged him so that he could return to Vraja. ||14||

O Rādhā! The fools think that Kṛṣṇa was attracted to Vraja for some other reason. The wise know that the main reason for his attraction was the treasure of your good qualities. ||15||

[39] He concluded: “O Rādhā! There is no need to describe things further. What I have described you can see directly in front of you. Look! Kṛṣṇa remains standing for a long time, gazing at your face which is covered in tears.” ||16||

[40] When the reciters finished their talk and returned to their quarters with the others, Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa went to their abode while longing for each other.

Chapter Twenty-three

Meeting in Kurukṣetra

[1] The next day, Madhukaṇṭha began thinking in the assembly of Nanda in the presence of Kṛṣṇa.

[2-3] “I should now tell the story of the trip to Kurukṣetra. Śukadeva has placed this event much later in his narration because of the madness of *prema* which produced simultaneous revelation of pastimes. That is evident because Bhīṣma, Droṇa and Duryodhana came there as well. The trip to Kurukṣetra took place before Balarāma went on pilgrimage, which ended when Duryodhana was killed. In the conversation between Kuntī and Vasudeva at Kurukṣetra they refer to the killing of Kaṃsa. Thus the trip took place not too long after killing Kaṃsa.

> *kaṃsa-pratāpitāḥ sarve vayaṃ yātā diśaṃ diśam |*
> *etarhy eva punaḥ sthānaṃ daivenāsāditāḥ svasaḥ ||*
>
> Harassed by Kaṃsa, we all fled in various directions, but by the grace of Providence we have now finally been able to return to our homes, my dear sister.” SB 10.82.21

[4] Then he spoke aloud:

After this, two more messengers arrived. They said, “In Dvārakā Kṛṣṇa made arrangements so that there was no lack, and now the people of the three worlds are happy to see him because, hearing of a solar eclipse from the astrologers, your son will worship the power of the sun

and make all people happy. The *devatās* will worship him. Making an announcement which produces joy in all directions, he is going to Kurukṣetra along with his family members.”

[5] After they spoke, first consulting with Yaśodā, Nanda then consulted everyone gathered in the assembly: “Though we have great desire to go to Kṛṣṇa, misfortune has prevented this. You have also concluded that it is unlikely that he will come here. It is now heard that he is very eager to go to Kurukṣetra to see the solar eclipse and he is also full of affection for you. Since all people of the universe will come there, our going will not be surprising. This will not give the enemies an opportunity to see us as his friends and cause us problems because we are related to him.”

[6] All said with showers of tears: “You have spoken nicely. But who should stay to protect Vraja? Someone should be appointed. Those who have kept their wealth, homes and children for Kṛṣṇa, after long separation, have not had the opportunity to meet him quickly. By what logic can any of the cowherds who have the desire to meet him on the pretext of a journey to Kurukṣetra be prevented?” ||1||

[7] As they were considering this for a long time, a letter from Dvārakā arrived in the assembly:

O father! As long as I have not destroyed the enemies, I desire some means by which we can meet. Thus I suffer. I have found a solution now, after a long time. Kurukṣetra will be full of people on the occasion of the eclipse. I can easily meet you by this arrangement. ||2||

Of course, I will come to Vraja and directly meet everyone. However those who do not believe this should

come and meet me in Kurukṣetra. The others can stay in Vraja. ||3||

Even though the cows are my heart and my friends are my life, these friends should stay firmly in Vraja with the cows. ||4||

[8] Hearing this everyone spoke their approval. Among those who developed faith by experiencing Kṛṣṇa directly, the friends praised the proposal to show their acceptance: “Since we serve him with our millions of life airs, if he gives even a small order, we will accept it.”

[9] On speaking the last part, Madhukaṇṭha became choked up and remained silent. Snigdhakaṇṭha had to conclude:

“Remembering your strong enthusiasm for going to Kurukṣetra, my intelligence begins to tremble. O Nanda! My intelligence is now constantly merged in bliss seeing Kṛṣṇa on your lap in Vraja.” ||5||

[10] In this way the day’s talk was finished. The same evening, in the assembly of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa, Snigdhakaṇṭha spoke:

Kṛṣṇa sent a letter composed of secret words to the *gopīs:*

Though my secret meeting with you is always delightful, you are not aware of this meeting because of thinking it is only my *sphūrti.* So much for my meeting you! It is possible for us to meet together in a situation where I am not despised and those who oppose our meeting are not present. O beloved *gopīs*, at Kurukṣetra, once let us meet together for maintaining our lives. ||6||

[11] When Yaśodā became eager to go, Rādhā and others also became eager.

[12] But the apparent husbands of the *gopīs* who had previously prevented them from meeting Kṛṣṇa were also eager to go. Since they saw the possibility of the *gopīs'* dying because of longing, they saw that everyone was completely dedicated to Kṛṣṇa, and they realized the impossibility of preventing them from seeing him, they gave up interest in stopping the *gopīs'* going. They wanted to go separately but then because of the secret message sent by Kṛṣṇa, his close friends, taking the permission of Nanda, on the pretext of the danger of leaving Vraja unprotected, engaged those apparent husbands and others in guarding Vraja, while showing great friendship on meeting them.

[13] Yaśodā, who had a secret but very strong affection for these *gopīs,* and suspected their great pain in separation from him caused by their pure love for her son, made Rādhā and others go along with her, not hiding her secret any longer.

[14] In the morning the journey to Kurukṣetra was undertaken.

[15] The reciter concluded: "O Rādhā! In hopes of meeting him, your body and senses dried up. For him, with thin bodies you went to Kurukṣetra. Now continually associating with him in your house, you become intoxicated with the liquor of bliss." ||7||

[16] When the two speakers had finished, they went with the others to their residences. Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa, bursting with joy by realizing inconceivable happiness, went to their chambers.

[17] In the morning which destroys all sins, in Nanda's assembly illuminated by Kṛṣṇa, Madhukaṇṭha spoke with a choked voice:

The chests of the Vraja people quivered in anticipation of seeing Kṛṣṇa. They gave bliss to all eyes because their hairs stood on end and they were drenched with tears. ||8||

Because their teeth clattered from trembling, their words became unintelligible. Because many thoughts appeared and disappeared, they were constantly in confusion. ||9||

They acted calmly externally like realized souls but internally they considered everything illusory because of bliss on seeing Kṛṣṇa constantly. ||10||

Their bodies became thin because of forgetting to eat or sleep but they were always serving Kṛṣṇa. Even persons who did not know Kṛṣṇa and those who disrespected him went along. ||11||

Somehow, they all went to Kurukṣetra. On hearing they were near, a heavy load of a hundreds of types of happiness inundated Kṛṣṇa's body. He could thus not go to them quickly. ||12||

Nanda and others smelled Kṛṣṇa's fragrance, though Kṛṣṇa was not present. When they came closer, Kṛṣṇa was there with his royal retinue. ||13||

[18] When Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma heard that the people of Vraja were near, they reverted to their cowherd mood. Their minds melting because of wanting to serve them with devotion, they went to meet them but they could not move quickly. They sent the assembled kings to separate camps with an excuse, "All my enemies do not know that I am friends with the people of Vraja." For this reason through Uddhava he placed Nanda and the others in an isolated place where he could console them in private.

[19] After leaving aside those who were not relatives, Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma along with relatives went to meet the people of Vraja. From far off, they offered respects on the ground to Nanda with reverence. Nanda's body began to shake. His eyes filled with tears and his hairs stood on end. Nanda embraced them both at once and cried with a choked voice, with an unsteady mind.

[20] Though Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma wanted to embrace him, because of all the people present, they offered respects on the ground at Nanda's feet.

[21] Though Nanda wanted to relieve them of the fatigue from their offering respects, because of lack of control from his emotions, his hands could not move properly. He just looked here and there. Then he saw Vasudeva and others who said, "May you two live long!" Nanda and his group remained reserved however.

[22] Recovering himself, he then made Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma comfortable and asked how they were. Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma stood before Nanda with folded hands and then, after Vasudeva embraced Nanda, they met the best of sages and others such as Pradyumna who wanted to meet him. Then Vasudeva brought Nanda to his residence as if he were a *devatā* while Kṛṣṇa, Balarāma and others followed. There they all worshiped Nanda.

[23] Hearing that Yaśodā was inside a cloth-covered cart surrounded by many women, Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma entered with her permission. They saw her as she saw them.

[24] Looking like a creeper whose leaves had withered in the intense sun of separation from Kṛṣṇa, on seeing Kṛṣṇa, she was thrown far on the path by the swift wind of zeal on seeing him. Having attained the monsoon

seasons in the form of her son, she became liquid from the greed which spread from her root of affection. ||14||

Seeing her dried up body, Devakī became busy trying to satisfy her. But since she became healthy on seeing Kṛṣṇa, that became unnecessary. ||15||

Seeing Kṛṣṇa with Balarāma, holder of the plough, in Kurukṣetra, she stood up though afflicted by the separation. At that instant he along with Balarāma ran and fell at her feet. ||16||

She raised them up, as they had their knees on the ground. She embraced their two heads on her chest and shed tears. Devakī and others wondered: “How can Yaśodā with such a thin body produce this river which continually increases, spreading over the universe?” ||17||

Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma fell at her feet and cried, as if obliterating themselves in tears. This made everyone else weep. When this happened Yaśodā became worried and stopped her tears while wondering if the two also felt the pain of separation in their hearts. ||18||

Seeing her face had dried, the two brothers looked around and then had their mother meet the other women. This made her melt with affection. ||19||

Among the women with sons, Rohiṇī and others gradually controlled themselves and had Yaśodā immediately sit on a shining white deerskin seat. Then they sat down. ||20||

Regarding themselves as Kṛṣṇa’s mother, Devakī and others dealt with Yaśodā neutrally. ||21||

But the motherly affection of Devakī and those with her was nothing in front of Yaśodā’s motherly affection. If a

monsoon cloud lingers in the sky, what is the need for the farmer to water his fields? ||22||

Smelling their fragrant heads and moistening them with her tears, she then saw that their faces were filled with tears and wiped them. For her, a *kalpa* became a few moments. Seeing this, Rohiṇī and Devakī desired to respect her with great reverence. ||23||

When Rohiṇī and along with queens like Rukmiṇī began to worship Yaśodā, Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma went outside and moved here and there busily in order to worship all the cowherds as guests. ||24||

There was none among the cowherds who was not received as a guest, for there was no one from Vraja whom Kṛṣṇa did not approach and worship. ||25||

What to speak of associating with the gentlemen of Vraja! How to describe Kṛṣṇa's association with the old bulls of Vraja which had come to Kurukṣetra? Again and again he came to them and embraced their necks, sprinkling their bodies with his tears. ||26||

[25] When all the people of Vraja had become peaceful, Rohiṇī and Devakī, again embracing Yaśodā with minds filled with affection, spoke to her: "O queen of Vraja! You and your husband have a treasure of *prema* that you do not give up. Though even one of the two of us enjoys the wealth of Indra, that wealth cannot be compared to your wealth of *prema.* Millions of responses can never equal your love."

[26] Sincere Devakī spoke: "For a long time from their birth these two children did not know their father and mother. Following *dharma*, the brothers took you two as their father and mother. You protected the two boys just as eye lashes protect the eye. Even now that affection

stays in their minds. Though Balarāma is accepted as the son of Rohiṇī, this does not create an unfavorable mood, since among elevated souls the idea of mine and yours does not arise.”

[27] Snigdhakaṇṭha said, “How did Yaśodā take this? Did she agree?”

[28] Madhukaṇṭha said, “Not at all.”

[29] Snigdhakaṇṭha said, “Why was that?”

[30] Madhukaṇṭha said, “After desiring for a long time, Yaśodā had Kṛṣṇa. All her senses were filled with happiness. How could she even think of Devakī’s words, by which she would further speculate?”

[31] Snigdhakaṇṭha said, “How did she adjust this subject, or did she not?”

[32] Madhukaṇṭha said:

No, no, because Rohiṇī prevented such adjustments. Let that be. If a person is not completely attached to particular object, when someone makes opposite statements about the object, that person will become disturbed with doubt. How could Nanda and Yaśodā who took Kṛṣṇa as their child with complete attachment even hear another strong viewpoint? ||27||

[33] And now please observe! Vasudeva and Devakī first thought that they were the father and mother of Kṛṣṇa. But Nanda and Yaśodā’s thinking that Kṛṣṇa was their child surpassed that of Vasudeva and Devakī. Nanda and Yaśodā became happy. ||28||

[34] Having spoken in Nanda’s assembly, Madhukaṇṭha then spoke in the assembly of Rādhā and Mādhava.

When the day passed in hundreds of exchanges of *prema*, Nanda and the others retired to their dwellings.

The place became vacant because everyone went to sleep. Kṛṣṇa went to the place where the *gopīs* lived, constructed by Uddhava and Balarāma in a joyful mood.

[35] The condition of the *gopīs* is described.

In going to Kurukṣetra to see Kṛṣṇa the *gopīs* had their eyes closed. Then they opened their eyes. Then they fainted. Then they walked fast. Then they cried. Filled with longing, a moment seemed like a *kalpa* for them. || 29||

[36] Meeting him:

Putting Uddhava in front, Kṛṣṇa, the dark cloud rose very gently and brought to life the *cātaka* bird *gopīs*. || 30||

Kṛṣṇa looked at the *gopīs.* They were thin, with unkempt bodies, wearing old worn-out clothing. Their hair was falling over their faces. He became dizzy and took support of Uddhava. Weeping for a long time, he did not understand when he had come, why he came, what he was doing and what had happened. ||31||

[37] When they glanced at his limbs on that long night, how can it be described? When the four eyes of Kṛṣṇa and a *gopī* met, quickly her heart and her two eyes would become stunned. ||32||

Who can describe the transformations of love that the *gopīs,* filled with thirst because of the fire of long separation, achieved on seeing him. They cursed king Nimi[11] for causing obstruction to seeing him by the blinking of their eyes? ||33||

Rādhā fainted on climbing onto a cart at Kurukṣetra because of her great longing. Kṛṣṇa did the same. The

fragrance of his limbs which conquered her as she looked at him made the other *gopīs* also faint. ||34||

When Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa met, the symptoms of being stunned, perspiration, hairs standing on end, choked voice, trembling, loss of color, tears and fainting occurred. These symptoms spread to the other *gopīs* also. ||35||

[38] In great distress, Uddhava after a long time managed to revive them. With affection and care he made them sit together in front of him.

[39] Their limbs faded because of emotions, their beauty lost because of tears welling up from inside, when the *gopīs* looked at Kṛṣṇa's feet with longing, he began wiping away their tears and skillfully made the *gopīs* happy.

In a solitary place at Kurukṣetra, Kṛṣṇa embraced and kissed the lotus-eyed *gopīs*, wiped away their tears, asked how they were and began praising them while comforting them. ||36||

"O dearest *gopīs*! This first separation has been most difficult for me. It is not surprising that it was possible that I die. What is surprising is that you maintained your life in prolonged separation to attain me. For that I praise you continually. Why did you remain suffering on seeing me within yourselves? Did you not see me?" ||37||

[40] Again he spoke: "Let everyone with faulty vision say that my form remains as previously with all its qualities. If you by good fortune see me, will you see the taste for the *rāsa* pastimes still there?" ||38||

[41] Slightly raising their hundreds of eyes simultaneously, they looked at him. Identifying with their

earlier profound sorrow, they became greatly distressed. Quickly assuming a different mood, Kṛṣṇa then slightly smiled to make their suffering seem insignificant, and spoke. Śukadeva describes his words.

api smaratha naḥ sakhyaḥ svānām artha-cikīrṣayā |
gatāṃś cirāyitāñ chatru- pakṣa-kṣapaṇa-cetasaḥ ||
apy avadhyāyathāsmān svid akṛta-jñāviśaṅkayā |
nūnaṃ bhūtāni bhagavān yunakti viyunakti ca ||
vāyur yathā ghanānīkaṃ tṛṇaṃ tūlaṃ rajāṃsi ca |
saṃyojyākṣipate bhūyas tathā bhūtāni bhūta-kṛt ||
mayi bhaktir hi bhūtānām amṛtatvāya kalpate |
diṣṭyā yad āsīn mat-sneho bhavatīnāṃ mad-āpanaḥ ||
ahaṃ hi sarva-bhūtānām ādir anto 'ntaraṃ bahiḥ |
bhautikānāṃ yathā khaṃ vār bhūr vāyur jyotir aṅganāḥ ||
evaṃ hy etāni bhūtāni bhūteṣv ātmātmanā tataḥ |
ubhayaṃ mayy atha pare paśyatābhātam akṣare ||

My dear girīfriends, do you still remember me? It was for my relatives' sake that I stayed away so long, intent on destroying my enemies. Do you perhaps think I'm ungrateful and thus hold me in contempt? After all, it is the Supreme Lord who brings living beings together and then separates them. Just as the wind brings together masses of clouds, blades of grass, wisps of cotton and particles of dust, only to scatter them all again, so the creator deals with his created beings in the same way. Rendering devotional service to me qualifies any living being for eternal life. But by your good fortune you have developed a special loving attitude toward me, by which you have obtained me. Dear ladies, I am the beginning and end of all created beings and exist both within and without them, just as the elements ether, water, earth, air and fire are the

beginning and end of all material objects and exist both within and without them. In this way all created things reside within the basic elements of creation, while the spirit souls pervade the creation, remaining in their own true identity. You should see both of these–the material creation and the self–as manifest within me, the imperishable Supreme Truth. SB 10.82.41-46

[42] He first showed that he was dependent on external circumstances since he was not the Lord: he was controlled because he was not the Lord. Because he is the Lord, he bestows Brahman realization to his devotees alone (fourth verse) and he awards closeness to himself, which surpasses Brahman realization, to those with *prema.* From realizing Brahman one obtains an eternal position (fifth verse). He is the one form of happiness as the imperishable truth (sixth verse). Because of his disturbed state, he did not understand the irrationality of his words.

[43] The *gopīs* could not think because of the pain caused by intolerable separation, but still some of them asked: “O you who are liberated from all suffering! What are you saying? The statements are not related to each other at all. (First he says he is helpless, then he says as the Lord he bestows *bhakti,* and then he praises Brahman.)”

[44] When Uddhava understood this and bowed his head, Kṛṣṇa, in shame, spoke again:

O *sakhīs*! Why do you look at me with faded faces? If you say you are cursed because I gave you up and went far away, what can I do? The enemies put my friends into difficulty. Since I am the shelter of my friends, how can I ignore them?

[45] If you find fault because I have delayed in returning, the cause was unavoidable. After I killed Kaṃsa, his many friends became determined to take revenge. To help destroy them, I had to engage in various activities. It appears that I am ungrateful because I do not have that complete dedication to you that you have for me. That is true. But the meeting and separation in our relationship of eternal love is caused only by the Lord. There would be no separation if I were independent. And by my own powers, how could we even meet?

[46] Since Garga said, "He will have qualities like Nārāyaṇa," you can think of me as Nārāyaṇa. (SB 10.8.19) In that case your relationship with me is dependent on your *prema.* Your intense *prema* will quickly produce such *prema* in me. Thus I have said, "*Bhakti* to me produces nectar." (SB 10.82.44 quoted above) This establishes your external vision of me. However, internally I have an eternal relationship with you. Without cancelling the promise of eternal life, you should see the other two verses. Just as *ahaṅkāra* exists as the cause, maintenance and destruction of all elements, and the elements are the cause, maintenance and destruction of the bodies–like the six musical notes causing a variety of music–and just as the *jīvas* exist in bodies, so the *jīva* is pervaded by the Paramātmā. This is the connected meaning of the verses. The word "see (*paśyata*)" indicates that the *gopīs* particularly should take notice. The *atmanepada* form is meant (*paśyadhvam*), for their benefit. This has been indicated earlier. In this way, with the relation of the pervader and the pervaded, see that everything exists (*ābhāta*) under my shelter, in me, who am situated elsewhere (*pare)* but always with you (a*kṣare*), proved by my *sphūrti.* Do not

see me to be hidden as do people with material eyes. Remember that form which you have constantly realized.

[47] In this way Kṛṣṇa instructed the *gopīs,* giving teachings on *ātmā-jñāna,* but the *gopīs* remained disturbed on remembering his previous separation. But now at Kurukṣetra they attained Kṛṣṇa, who gives satisfaction internally and externally, with an eternal relationship as indicated by himself. But there was an obstacle to this eternal relationship which depressed the *gopīs*. But by his powerful words starting with "*Bhakti* to me" he again satisfied them. Covered in tears, after some time they made a request:

O Lord with the lotus navel! We pray to you. May your lotus feet remain in our minds at all times! The yogīs destroy ignorance by remembering those feet but when we remember your feet we end up in ignorance (in pain of separation). ||39||

[48] You have also said this to Uddhava:

> *mayi tāḥ preyasāṃ preṣṭhe dūra-sthe gokula-striyaḥ |*
> *smarantyo 'ṅga vimuhyanti virahautkaṇṭhya-vihvalāḥ ||*
>
> My dear Uddhava, for those women of Gokula I am the most cherished object of love. Thus when they remember me, who am so far away, they are overwhelmed by the anxiety of separation. SB 10.46.5

[49] We cannot get perfection by following your instruction to absorb our minds in you. And we cannot come to you at will since we are controlled by people in our houses. We will get some happiness if we see those lotus feet, if those feet remain always in Vraja. This is the intention of Śukadeva's words:

> Dear Lord, whose navel is just like a lotus flower, your lotus feet are the only shelter for those who have fallen into the deep well of material existence. Your feet are worshiped and meditated upon by great mystic yogīs and highly learned philosophers. We wish that these lotus feet may also be awakened within our hearts, although we are only ordinary persons engaged in household affairs. SB 10.82.48

[50] Afflicted by separation, the *gopīs* again fainted. This lasted two *muhūrtas.* Then Kṛṣṇa, overcome with anxiety, spoke: “Oh! Your pure character is spreading everywhere. Because of great longing your intelligence has lost its power of discernment. Have you forgotten what I have just said?”

[51] With choked voices they said, “What was that?”

[52] He answered, “Rendering devotional service to me qualifies any living being for eternal life. But by your good fortune you have developed a special loving attitude toward me, by which you have obtained me.”

[53] They said, “That is true. But since our hearts have been pierced by the dagger of separation, how can those hearts remember anything? Therefore give us what we asked for in our prayer.”

[54] Snigdhakaṇṭha said, “What did Kṛṣṇa do?”

[55] Madhukaṇṭha said:

Śukadeva describes this:

> *tathānugṛhya bhagavān gopīnāṃ sa gurur gatiḥ |*
> *yudhiṣṭhiram athāpṛcchat sarvāṃś ca suhṛdo ’vyayam ||*
>
> Thus Lord Kṛṣṇa, the spiritual master of the *gopīs* and the very purpose of their life, showed them his mercy.

> He then met with Yudhiṣṭhira and all his other relatives and inquired from them about their welfare. SB 10.83.1

[56] As the fourth *praharas* of the night passed, the night's discussion had only been touched briefly. Being merciful according to their prayers, showing great affection, he embraced them all headed by Rādhā with tearful eyes. Ordering Uddhava he had bath water and ornaments brought, and offered them to the *gopīs.* He spent the night there secretly.

[57] Since those identifying themselves as husbands, who had doggedly obstructed the *gopīs* who had violated the local and religious norms had not come, no one at Kurukṣetra was aware that they went out secretly. On the first night they were inclined to remember separation. This was not suitable for blissful pastimes. Gradually after overcoming their suffering, on later nights they enjoyed the night pastimes at the end of night.

As long as he stayed in Kurukṣetra, Kṛṣṇa enjoyed pastimes with each *gopī,* each night, each second, in private, fulfilling all desires that arose. ||40||

Though he performed pastimes with the *gopīs* at other places other than Vṛndāvana, both he and the *gopīs* considered the happiness from those pastimes to be momentary like a dream.

Though they met constantly, they were unsatisfied, for previous and future separations dwelled in their hearts. ||41 - 42||

Though he protected the *gopīs* who were hidden from others at Kurukṣetra, they were worshiped by the respectable women for their qualities. ||43||

[58] The queens praised Rādhā with verses:

We desire the same contact with the Supreme Lord’s feet that the young women of Vraja, the cowherd boys and even the aborigine Pulinda women desire–the touch of the dust he leaves on the plants and grass as he tends his cows. SB 10.83.43

This is further described:

We do not desire Vaikuṇṭha, what to speak of other destinations. We desire to carry the dust of Kṛṣṇa’s feet on our heads. The fragrance of *kuṃkuma* from Rādhā’s chest, smeared on the grass from his feet and later put on the bodies of the Pulinda women, which is desired by the *gopīs,* attracts our hearts even now. ||44||

[59] The *gopīs* praised Rādhā as the most exalted in the following verses:

The aborigine women of the Vṛndāvana area become disturbed by lust when they see the grass marked with reddish *kuṃkuma* powder. Endowed with the color of Kṛṣṇa’s lotus feet, this powder originally decorated the breasts of his beloveds, and when the aborigine women smear it on their faces and breasts, they feel fully satisfied and give up all their anxiety. SB 10.21.17

Certainly this particular *gopī* has perfectly worshiped the all-powerful Personality of Godhead, Govinda, since he was so pleased with her that he abandoned the rest of us and brought her to a secluded place. SB 10.30.28

Vyāsa has also revealed her by name:

In Vārāṇasī, Viśālākṣī presides. In Puri, Vimalā presides. In Dvārakā, Rukmiṇī presides and in Vṛndāvana, Rādhā presides.[12] *Matsya Purāṇa*

[60] Snigdhakaṇṭha said:

I cannot fully understand the words of Śukadeva, who gives all happiness. He said:

Thus Lord Kṛṣṇa, the spiritual master of the *gopīs* and the very purpose of their life, showed them his mercy. He then met with Yudhiṣṭhira and all his other relatives and inquired from them about their welfare.

What does “showing them mercy” and “inquired from them about their welfare” mean. Please fully explain this according to the combination of place, time and cause.

[61] Madhukaṇṭha said, “Kṛṣṇa had a palatial room for taking bath with a solitary room attached. Uddhava’s room was nearby. This room could not be seen from the outside. Though most respectable Yudhiṣṭhira and others came to Kurukṣetra on that night, Kṛṣṇa was absorbed in the *gopīs*. Thus he did not meet them at that time. In the morning while sitting in the assembly hall after taking bath later he met Yudhiṣṭhira and asked about his welfare.

[62] Describing things briefly and looking at the moon face of Rādhikā, Madhukaṇṭha then concluded: “O Rādhā! Describing your happiness after long separation at Kurukṣetra, by good fortune I am submerged in bliss. Moreover, with my eyes I now taste the sweetest feast of you two.” ||45||

[63] Describing the events of the highest bliss, the reciter with his younger brother went to their rooms with the others as previously. Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa desired to go to their abode of pastimes.

Chapter Twenty-four

Nanda Returns to Vraja

[1] At the assembly where Kṛṣṇa was present, in the morning Snigdhakaṇṭha began speaking.

It is not possible to describe the pomp of the people gathered at Kurukṣetra.

I can describe some among all the various actions performed by people gathered at Kurukṣetra for the eclipse. But please hear about one outstanding memory– the sweet nectar flowing from the gleaming face of the Lord that spread everywhere. ||1||

[2] I will describe a little of what is pleasing to us and which spread everywhere.

At Kurukṣetra the sun became invisible and Rāhu became visible. Attaining Kṛṣṇa after coming from Vraja, Nanda along with his people gathered piles of jewels from the treasury to distribute. On seeing the eclipse, all the people engaged in various acts of charity. ||2||

Some desired *dharma* by giving to *devatās* and Pitṛs, some desired *artha* and some desired liberation. Some desired *bhakti* to Kṛṣṇa. The cowherds desired only Kṛṣṇa's well being. ||3||

[3] When the festival of the eclipse was completed, and Kṛṣṇa had satisfied the Prajāpatis present in the form of *devatās* and humans by his qualities and was himself satisfied by the *prema* of the Vraja people, the Kumāras

and other sages arrived to give realization of the bliss of Brahman.

[4] Not only were the sages surprised by Kṛṣṇa's prosperity but by his humbleness in front of them. The prosperity and humbleness, though of contrary natures, coexisted in harmony. ||4||

[5] They spoke of this as per *Bhāgavatam*:

> *adya no janma-sāphalyaṃ vidyāyās tapaso dṛśaḥ |*
> *tvayā saṅgamya sad-gatyā yad antaḥ śreyasāṃ paraḥ //*
>
> Today our birth, education, austerity and vision have all become perfect because we have been able to associate with you, the goal of all saintly persons. Indeed, you yourself are the ultimate, supreme blessing. SB 10.84.21

[6] In this vein there is another verse:

Although we see you in every *kalpa* in various forms, the essence of our goals appears newer and newer each time. ||5||

Though Dvāpara-yuga will not be destroyed to remove the doubt, it is possible to destroy doubt at the end of Dvāpara-yuga since you become visible. ||6||

[7] They considered in their minds:

Though the Yadus reside with Kṛṣṇa and understand his intentions, they do not speak of the cowherds, whose foot dust is desired by Brahmā. ||7||

[8] Wondering where the cowherds were, they then asked permission to leave and were about to go. Vasudeva, with a desire to make his wealth successful

made a request to the sages: “Please give instructions on how to destroy *karma* by doing actions.”

Nārada began thinking to himself: “Vasudeva is not aware of the pure parental feelings of Nanda. Nanda is praised profusely as follows:

O learned *brāhmaṇa,* mother Yaśodā’s breast milk was sucked by the Supreme Personality of Godhead. What past auspicious activities did she and Nanda Mahārāja perform to achieve such perfection in ecstatic love? SB 10.8.46

But Vasudeva is not praised like that. He is respected because he thinks of Kṛṣṇa as the Supreme Lord. He thinks of Kṛṣṇa since his birth as follows:

My Lord, you are the Supreme Person, beyond material existence, and you are the Supersoul. Your form can be perceived by transcendental knowledge, by which you can be understood as the Supreme Personality of Godhead. I now understand your position perfectly. SB 10.3.13

His feelings as a father are covered by this respect for Kṛṣṇa as God. Thus, even though Kṛṣṇa is present (and he knows he is God), he inquires about destruction of *karma*, considering Kṛṣṇa to be ignorant like a regular boy. Nanda desires only Kṛṣṇa’s well being. His questioning in this way is not attractive.”

[9] Nārada spoke aloud:

> *nāticitram idaṃ viprā vasudevo bubhutsayā |*
> *kṛṣṇaṃ matvārbhakaṃ yan naḥ pṛcchati śreya ātmanaḥ ||*
>
> O *brāhmaṇas,* it is not so amazing that in his eagerness to know, Vasudeva has asked us about his ultimate

benefit, for he considers Kṛṣṇa a mere boy. SB 10.84.30

[10] Seeing Vasudeva's hesitation, the sages spoke to put him at ease:

karmaṇā karma-nirhāra eṣa sādhu-nirūpitaḥ |
yac chraddhayā yajed viṣṇuṃ sarva-yajñeśvaraṃ makhaiḥ ||

It has been definitely concluded that work is counteracted by further work when one executes Vedic sacrifices as a means of worshiping Viṣṇu, the Lord of all sacrifices, with sincere faith. SB 10.84.35

[11] Afterwards Vasudeva accepted the sages as priests and they had him perform the sacrifice. At the sacrifice Marīci, Atri, Pulastya and other sons were the priests. Vasudeva was the sponsor. Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma, taking the role of his sons, were the attendants. Nanda, taking permission, was also present. How to describe all the *devatās*, *brāhmaṇas* and *kṣatriyas* worthy of worship at that sacrifice on earth? ||8||

[12] Sages like Jaimini, advocates of Pūrva-mīmāṃṣa, did not consider another type of *apūrva* (pious results for actions).

What the Kumāras, who live for Brahmā's lifetime and who see everything, considered astonishing at that sacrifice should to be regarded as the real result (*apūrva*). ||9||

The result of the sacrifice:

The sages, repeatedly looking at the form called Kṛṣṇa which astonished even Vyāsa and which was the shelter of the Yadus and the life of the cowherds, did not desire

to leave, but knowing they were unqualified to do as they pleased, they asked permission to leave. ||10||

When the sages with their followers left, they remained there by the manifestation of their glory, though they returned home. ||11||

[13] Sending off his relatives bound by affection, Kṛṣṇa had Nanda and the others remain. This was the purpose of the pilgrimage. Since it was not pleasant for them to be without milk, Kṛṣṇa had some cows sent. In order to fool the enemies, Kṛṣṇa and the people of Vraja placed their camps far apart and went on trips to various holy places in the vicinity. The people of Vraja had come to Kurukṣetra with Kṛṣṇa as their only goal. Since they had attained Kṛṣṇa, an ocean of nectar, their minds did not wander elsewhere. Though Nanda and Yaśodā were filled with waves of bliss by their son, the young sons of Kṛṣṇa also filled Nanda and Yaśodā repeatedly with intense bliss, just as the rays of the moon fill the ocean with water.

Yaśodā in Kurukṣetra played with her child many times and sometimes became astonished as she did previously by that black child. ||12||

[14] In this way Kṛṣṇa and the Vraja inhabitants became fully satisfied, while not being noticed by the enemies.

Kṛṣṇa went many times with Balarāma to the residences of the cowherds made from carts, similar to those in Vraja. And many times he went alone. In those houses he acted like a small child towards his mother. My mind becomes bewildered, wondering whether he was happy or sad. ||13||

[15] Taking the opportunity, Vasudeva along with his followers, touching Nanda’s hand, spoke to Nanda:

O brother! One can see something astonishing in this variegated world created by the Lord. Even detached sages are bound by ties of affection whereas householders like me are not. ||14||

Look! Though your intelligence is very sober, you are bound by our affection, whereas my affection is by duty alone, devoid of real affection. ||15||

O brother! Though I am devoid of affection, you do not show indifference to me. And though that is so, I have no attraction for you. ||16||

Without money, a man is lame. With money, he is blind. This can be seen in persons like me. When I am poor I cannot help you and when I am rich I am blind and do not think of helping. ||17||

evaṃ sauhṛda-śaithilya- citta ānakadundubhiḥ |
ruroda tat-kṛtāṃ maitrīṃ smarann aśru-vilocanaḥ ||

His heart softened by feelings of intimate sympathy and he wept. His eyes brimmed with tears as he remembered the friendship Nanda had shown him. (SB 10.84.65) ||18||

[16] Madhukaṇṭha asked, “What did Nanda answer?”

[17] Snigdhakaṇṭha said, “Nothing.”

[18] Madhukaṇṭha said, “Oh! Why?”

[19] Snigdhakaṇṭha said, “Vasudeva had taken his son and now remembered Nanda’s affection. Having affection for Vasudeva who wanted his son, he thought it best to remain silent.” ||19||

[20] Madhukaṇṭha said, “Tell what happened after that.”

[21] Snigdhakaṇṭha said:

To please his friend Vasudeva, Nanda did not reveal his desire. Three months quickly passed at Kurukṣetra because of the love he had for Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma. Each day he said he would go the next day. Kṛṣṇa had the unavoidable duty of killing more demons. Thus Nanda approached Vasudeva so that he could return to Vraja without taking Kṛṣṇa on the pretext that he had been away from Vraja too long. He did not approach directly but through Uddhava, since he was too shy to directly approach him. But he did not ask Kṛṣṇa for permission to go through Uddhava.

Previously in separation, a moment seemed like a *yuga.* To see him, not knowing any other method, he quickly went to Kurukṣetra. After associating with his son for a long time, how could he directly ask Kṛṣṇa for permission to go? ||20||

How could Nanda, though he longed for Kṛṣṇa, ask his dear friend Vasudeva for Kṛṣṇa, since Vasudeva depended on Kṛṣṇa, accepted him as his son, and had attained divine happiness from him? ||21||

[22] Seeing Nanda's behavior, Vasudeva, holding great affection for him, with tears and choked voice informed Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma, who had great longing that Nanda come and live with them. Hearing this, Kṛṣṇa, with pale face, looked at Balarāma. With folded hands Balarāma spoke frankly: "O father! We will think about this, decide, and then inform you."

[23] Considering what was best for Nanda, Kṛṣṇa consulted with Rohiṇī, full of all bliss, and Balarāma and Uddhava, and finally came to a decision. He then sent Balarāma to inform Vasudeva. Arriving at Vasudeva's house, Balarāma said: "O mother and father! If you give

me fearlessness, then I will request you with all correctness.”

[24] They said, “Yes.”

[25] Balarāma said, “O mother and father! You have affection for Nanda and Yaśodā. Will you not fulfill their desire?” ||22||

[26] Vasudeva said, “What do they want?”

[27] Balarāma said, “Are you not aware?”

[28] Vasudeva said, “Yes we are aware. They have such attachment to Kṛṣṇa as their son. We are afraid because of this. Kṛṣṇa has pure intelligence and his nature is to be controlled by love. That will trap him.”

[29] Balarāma spoke with a laugh: “You were unable to protect me from birth and sent me from your place. They protected me. I take them as my parents. So what can be said of Kṛṣṇa? He was in their house from birth by your arrangement. He accepts them as his parents and they accept him as their son. This should be recognized. But he does not see you with such affection and you do not see him with such affection. If you really took Kṛṣṇa as your son, then you would have happiness like theirs. But you do not have that same happiness. But what is the use of such boldness in speaking? Kṛṣṇa cannot bear to see anyone suffering. Enough of such useless thinking!”

[30] Vasudeva said, “Let that be. Do what should be done.”

[31] Balarāma said, “Make a house resembling that in Vraja and have Kṛṣṇa stay there, just as he sometimes stays in Hastināpura.”

[32] Vasudeva thought to himself: “He has spoken correctly. How can Kṛṣṇa, whose sons and grandsons

have reached the height of excellence in household life, give up the opulence of Dvārakā?”

[33] He then spoke aloud: “Nanda and I are different in body only. Let him go to Vraja if he wants, or to Dvārakā if he wants, for he is the life of the people of Vraja and of us as well.”

[34] Hearing this, Balarāma left. Kṛṣṇa, hearing from Balarāma, offered his respects and with tears in his eyes, remained without speaking, with his swollen face lowered.

[35] Vasudeva went with Kṛṣṇa, Balarāma, Uddhava and Rohiṇī to Nanda’s cart camp. Meeting Nanda with proper etiquette, they spoke pleasantly:

“O brother Nanda! Kṛṣṇa is your son and mine. There is no difference. Please hear the reason why Kṛṣṇa has not been able to come your house till now. You have kept Kṛṣṇa with us so that the enemies will be destroyed. Kṛṣṇa wants to go to your house at every moment, and waiting for the last enemy to be killed.” ||23||

[36] Nanda and the other people of Vraja became satisfied. Śukadeva describes their previous condition:

With voices faltering out of love for him, those cowherds, who had dedicated everything to lotus-eyed Kṛṣṇa, asked about the health of their dear ones in Dvārakā, and Balarāma in turn asked about the cowherds’ welfare.

In separation from Kṛṣṇa, they had no desire for anything else. They had offered all their wealth to qualified persons for his auspiciousness. But they were unable to fulfill their long-cherished desire that Kṛṣṇa return to Vraja. Now their hearts because unsteady, as they wondered if Kṛṣṇa would fulfill his promise or not.

Would he come to Vraja or go to Dvārakā? They began to think:

“Oh! Oh! Kṛṣṇa knows that we have always prayed that he return to Vraja. It is not proper to make him give up the wealth and his relatives which he must cherish. It is also not proper to let them directly know that Kṛṣṇa should come back to Vraja. Establishing the conduct of *kṣatriyas* at Dvārakā, he is bringing auspiciousness to the three worlds. He will certainly return to Vraja since he has promised this many times and since he is always most merciful to us. That is his final vow. All of our desires are centered on his attractive promise which should lend respect to his own conduct. We desire that his vow should be fulfilled.”

[37] Kṛṣṇa began to think: “Using remarkable means of consolation previously, I have ultimately treated the people of Vraja badly. I have not acted properly. It is not right that I speak to them with the same type of words now. I should indicate that I am coming to Vraja now, by sending all pleasurable things that I have enjoyed, thus accomplishing through *prema* whatever is included in *sāma, dāna, bheda* and *daṇḍa.* Articles which are my very life will satisfy those who take me as their very life, even if they are in Vraja.”

[38] Vyāsa has said:

> *tataḥ kāmaiḥ pūryamāṇaḥ sa-vrajaḥ saha-bāndhavaḥ |*
> *parārdhyābharaṇa-kṣauma- nānānarghya-paricchadaiḥ ||*
> *vasudevograsenābhyāṃ kṛṣṇoddhava-balādibhiḥ |*
> *dattam ādāya pāribarhaṃ yāpito yadubhir yayau ||*

Then, after Vasudeva, Ugrasena, Kṛṣṇa, Uddhava, Balarāma and others had fulfilled his desires and

> presented him with precious ornaments, fine linen and varieties of priceless household furnishings, Nanda Mahārāja accepted all these gifts and took his leave. Seen off by all the Yadus, he departed with his family members and the residents of Vraja. SB 10.84.67-68

But how can I describe the condition of Nanda and his followers on leaving? That condition remains in my mind. Their Articulation of speech and the complexion of their body disappeared. ||24||

Understanding that their strength of body and mind were weak, and thus subject to an attack by the enemy, on the pretext of a gift, Kṛṣṇa had many servants, bards and foot soldiers accompany them. ||25||

Nanda and the cowherds with difficulty left Kurukṣetra and reached the area of Mathurā. To reach their houses, they crossed the Yamunā with minds detached from their previous residence, and had the people live at a well-known place called Gorayi, far from their previous residence. ||26||

In Sanskrit, the name is Gokula-pati, in vernacular it is Gourava and in slang it is Gorayi. ||27||

Gokula-pati is famous as the residence of Nanda. As the place belonging to Puruṣottama is called Puruṣottama, so the place belonging to Gokula-pati is called Gokula-pati. ||28||

[39] Speaking and then grieving for a moment, the speaker introduced a pleasant subject to conclude:

“I offer respects to the path from Kurukṣetra to Vraja where Nanda stayed, since it is auspicious and attractive. Kṛṣṇa was able to relieve his pain of

separation for his Vraja friends by thinking of this auspicious path.” ||29||

[40] When the talk in Nanda’s assembly was over, Snigdhakaṇṭha spoke in the assembly of Rādhā.

On hearing the words of Vasudeva, “O Nanda, this son is yours and mine, there is no difference,” the *gopīs* thought that those words indicated Kṛṣṇa as their object of service in the future and thus those words gave them joy. But with choked voices they said, “Though he is delaying so long, why does he delay with us?”

[41] Hearing this through Uddhava, Kṛṣṇa in shame gave an order:

I have previously described this:

> *api smaratha naḥ sakhyaḥ svānām artha-cikīrṣayā*
> *gatāṃś cirāyitāñ chatru- pakṣa-kṣapaṇa-cetasaḥ //*
>
> My dear girlfriends, do you still remember me? It was for my relatives’ sake that I stayed away so long, intent on destroying my enemies. SB 10.82.41

I am delayed slightly longer because a few more enemies must be destroyed. Please wait for a few days as previously until there is good fortune for you and me.

[42] Accepting that his words were not untrue, at another time, they met him and spoke: “O Kṛṣṇa! Can your true words ever be pronounced otherwise? If time can tolerate our hope (and we live till you return), those words will be proven true.” ||30||

[43] Embracing each *gopī,* Kṛṣṇa accepted this: “When you accept Kṛṣṇa, your condition is permeated with time. In that condition, ordinary time has no jurisdiction.” ||31||

[44] Though the night before the morning when the people would travel to the area of Mathurā ended quickly for the *gopīs* in Kurukṣetra, that night, bringing pain of separation, did not desire to end. Fear was the cause of not wanting to end the night (of bringing separation the next day) and fear was the cause of ending the night (so that Kṛṣṇa's plans of killing the demons could be fulfilled). ||32||

[45] The narrator concluded: "O Rādhā! Kurukṣetra is amazing. The seed of promise that Kṛṣṇa planted there and in Vraja sprouted in Kurukṣetra and bore fruit in Vraja. The lord of your heart, for whom you went to Kurukṣetra with a firm vow, and for whom you gave up your houses and went to the forest, is embracing you all and living here. What greater happiness than this?" ||33 - 34||

[46] Giving happiness to the *sakhīs*, the two reciters left with their associates. Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa began to fulfill their desires.

Chapter Twenty-five

Uddhava’s Advice

[1] The next day when the sun was in the sky, in Nanda’s assembly with Kṛṣṇa present, Madhukaṇṭha spoke.

[2] Again Kṛṣṇa stayed continually in Dvārakā. In order to obtain news, Nanda as before sent messengers who offered respects to the many young sons in great wonder. Two messengers spoke to Nanda:

“O Nanda! Please hear something astonishing. When Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma went to get their sacred threads, and did so in secret, they went to a *gurukula* in Avantī to study. When they graduated, the wife of the *guru* requested that they bring her dead son back from Yamarāja. Devakī had heard this previously but kept the thought in her minds secretly for a long time, “I should ask sometime that Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma bring back my sons killed by Kaṃsa.” She then thought about her and Yaśodā’s conflicting claims for Kṛṣṇa as their child. Becoming determined to attain her sons, she thus sowed the seed of a request to Kṛṣṇa, in order to pluck the fruit.

[3] Hearing the words of the messenger, everyone said, “This is more astonishing than seeing Kṛṣṇa as God. Though she had two sons, Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma, she wanted more sons.”

[4] The messengers said, “One should consider how she thought of the two as her sons. Because of seeing their powers, she thought of their supreme lordship.”

[5] Again everyone said, “As bitter taste nourishes the sweet taste in a laḍḍu, so a show of greatness should nourish the happiness of friendship found in Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma. ||1||

[6] The messengers said, “Adding salt to a substance turns it salty. Can Vasudeva attain intense sweetness in that case?”

[7] Nanda said, “Let that be. Vasudeva has Kṛṣṇa and I desire him. But there is a great difference between us in regards to Kṛṣṇa. This should be explained later.”

[8] The messengers said:

Hear another astonishing thing. Balarāma and Kṛṣṇa then went to Sutala. There, Bali, son of Virocana, worshiped them properly with all the heavenly treasures he had accrued in Svarga. Bali had been keeping all the sons of Vasudeva killed by Kaṃsa. After Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma were worshiped by Bali, they took the six children, called *ṣaḍgarbha*, back to Dvārakā. In Sutala they had seen Bali’s house, which was like a storeroom of treasures and they received many of those treasures. Hear about some amazing incident there.

Though the Lord (Vāmana) personally resided in Bali’s house, when Bali saw Balarāma and Kṛṣṇa, he forgot about the other Lord in his house. ||2||

Forgetting the form of the Lord who was the object of surrender, he along with his family offered himself to Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma. ||3||

That he forgot the Lord was not important. Bali did not see the Lord situated at his door for he became absorbed in Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma because of his impressions after seeing them. ||4||

Not only by seeing Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma did Bali think that they were rare, but also his voice became choked up, his hairs stood on end, he became stunned, he perspired and he fainted. ||5||

[9] Everyone asked, “Please describe what happened after they returned to Dvārakā.”

[10] The messengers said:

Something astonishing happened at Dvārakā. Though Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma were present there, on seeing her six sons, Devakī’s breasts began to flow with milk profusely. With great desire, Kṛṣṇa first drank the milk, in order make the milk and the sons successful. He then served out special piety by having the six sons drink the remnants of that milk and expressed his own mood as a son by drinking. He then sent them to Vaikuṇṭha, the object of meditation for the *devatās.*

[11] This is only representative. Previous to this, Vasudeva ascertained that Kṛṣṇa was the Lord by enumerating the different elements emanating from him, and surprisingly gave up Kṛṣṇa as his son with this proposition. Then he concluded that Kṛṣṇa, who was filled with affection of Gokula, was God.

[12] With a smile Kṛṣṇa then said:

> *vaco vaḥ samavetārthaṃ tātaitad upamanmahe |*
> *yan naḥ putrān samuddiśya tattva-grāma udāhṛtaḥ ||*
>
> My dear father, I consider your statements appropriate, since you have explained the various categories of existence by referring to us, your sons. SB 10.85.22

[13] Seeing Devakī’s actions, the sages praised her:

Kṛṣṇa, who brought back the sons whom Devakī desired, drank the milk of Devakī which flowed to feed her sons. Ah! He fulfilled her desire and protected her happiness. How could he then reject Yaśodā? ||6||

[14] Hearing the learned words of the messengers, everyone became happy.

[15] The reciter concluded: “O Nanda! You became continually happy on hearing Kṛṣṇa would return. That happiness is now before you as previously, shining more attractive than a fresh cloud, wearing cloth flashing like lightning, decorated with a peacock feather.” ||7||

[16] That day, at the assembly of Kṛṣṇa, Madhukaṇṭha spoke on another subject.

[17] After satisfying Devakī’s desires, Kṛṣṇa thought of satisfying Yaśodā’s desires: “Oh! Oh! At Kurukṣetra I indicated this, but till today I have not done so since I must overcome Jarāsandha, Śiśupāla, Śālva, and Dantavakra, the enemies of Indra.”

[18] Thinking thus, he performed the daily rites starting at *brāhma-muhūrta*. All these things Nanda heard from messengers.

Kṛṣṇa got up, performed *ācamana*, meditated on the Lord, took bath in the lake, bathed, put on cloth, performed *sandhyā* rites while chanting *gāyatrī mantra*, and then offered oblations into the fire. He offered a*rghya* to the sun, offered *tarpaṇas* the forefathers, worshiped the sages, *devatās,* Pitṛs and *brāhmaṇas,* and distributed 13,084 cows in charity. ||8||

He bowed to the cows and *brāhmaṇas,* touched auspicious objects like a brown cow, decorated himself, looked at ghee, mirror, cows, *devatās* and *brāhmaṇas*,

satisfied people by donations, gave garlands, betel, and sandalwood, and then used the items himself. He then got on a chariot brought by his driver, grasping the driver's hand. ||9||

Like Viṣṇu shining with Garuḍa and Viṣvaksena on the sun planet, Kṛṣṇa appeared glorious with Sātyaki and Uddhava on the chariot. ||10||

He took the gems of his queens' hearts from the inner chambers, and, bound up by their eyes, he left with a smiling glance. ||11||

Seeing him, some people shouted, "Victory! Victory!" and others said, "All respects, all respects." Others chanted the Vedas and others praised him. Though there was no distinction in all the tumultuous cries, each of the sounds gave happiness individually. ||12||

He then entered the assembly hall with the Yadus, who were watching him come. The distinction of the hall was that anyone who entered became free from hunger, thirst, passion, hatred, happiness and distress. But what was its quality when Kṛṣṇa entered? ||13||

What to speak of the assembly hall! When the black and gold of Kṛṣṇa's body, jewels and dress spread in all directions, the Yadus there, lit by the rays of his effulgence, took on the qualities of his form and shone brilliantly in groups. ||14||

The hall was ornamented with *brāhmaṇas, māgadhas, sūtas, vandis*, dancers, clowns, each with their own instruments, and shone with many kings. In that attractive, astonishing hall, Kṛṣṇa looked at each person, while each person thought that Kṛṣṇa was looking only at him. ||15||

[19] A gate keeper holding a jeweled specter then announced, “O lord! There is a eunuch at the door. His face has no beauty.”

[20] Kṛṣṇa said, “Bring him in.”

[21] When brought in, that person looked at Kṛṣṇa with astonishment.

With a complexion like a cloud Kṛṣṇa destroyed the three miseries because he cooled the earth with the rays of his moon-like fame. ||16||

[22] Offering respects with all his limbs, thinking himself successful, the fortunate person came slightly forward when told to come. With folded hands he then spoke:

“I see that all people in the three worlds are attracted to Kṛṣṇa since they all have hairs standing on end and tears in their eyes. I must tell you the words of the kings imprisoned by Jarāsandha, though these words should be kept secret.” ||17||

[23] The person spoke:

Previously Jarāsandha called all the kings to help his attack on Mathurā. At that time he did not get all the kings. He then went around conquering them all and throwing them in prison. The kings are almost dead. Taking you as their only shelter, ten-thousand kings are requesting you:

O Kṛṣṇa, there is no limit to your forms and qualities. Your nature is to protect all those who surrender to you. Though you are separate from the four human goals, we have become your devotees to get liberation from material life. ||18||

We are surrendered to you but those who oppose you are proud. O killer of Kaṃsa! We have spoiled our sense of surrender. ||19||

We carry sin of another sort, because we see a fault in you, the Lord: since you protect the earth, why do we suffer from *karma* through Jarāsandha? ||20||

In this life we are not your pure devotees, nor are we surrendered to you. We have been proud, because of greed to obtain happiness as kings in this world. ||21||

We are bewildered by your *māyā.* You protect those who surrender to your lotus feet.

Thus free us from the noose of *karma* in the form of Jarāsandha. You are capable of doing this. ||22||

[24] After repeating the message of the king, the messenger spoke for himself:

You are Agastya, swallowing the ocean of sinful people; you are the sun for the righteous; you are Satya-yuga for the sinful and Dhanvantari for the suffering. Since you have appeared on this earth as Kṛṣṇa, who can say their desires are not fulfilled? ||23||

[25] The desire of the imprisoned kings is centered only on you, Kṛṣṇa, but out of shyness they did not reveal this.

[26] Because of this, you must give happiness to these suffering kings, devotees at your lotus feet, imprisoned by Jarāsandha, who desire your glance. ||24||

[27] Not only I say the following, but all the imprisoned kings say this as well with tears in their eyes and trembling bodies:

The burning body of Pūtanā became fragrant, the poison milk meant to kill Pūtanā turned into nectar. Mountains melt by the sound of your flute. Kubjā became beautiful.

The elder Yadus became youthful. The perfumed qualities of Kṛṣṇa attract our hearts constantly. ||25||

[28] The people in Nanda's assembly said, "Then what happened?"

[29 - 30] The messengers laughed with slight remorse:

When Kṛṣṇa desired to answer, Nārada, white like an autumn cloud, hair flashing like lightning, appeared, making resonant sounds on his *vīṇā.* By his glance he spread showers of happiness, giving *dāsya-bhāva* to everyone. Kṛṣṇa, desirous of his devotion, stood up and offered respects. Making him effulgent by worship, Kṛṣṇa then inquired from him:

"O Nārada! You wander everywhere. Meeting you is auspicious for the whole universe. I ask, bewildered by your great affection, what do you desire? If it is convenient, I would like to ask how my dear devotees the Pāṇḍavas are doing." ||26||

[31] Nārada answered:

O light of the Yadu dynasty! Without effort you have established peace in the universe by your fame. When I sing your glories, men give up their lovers as if they were old women. All of my and others' powers should be seen as your powers. Therefore because you can see everything I follow your order. ||27 - 28||

[32] Yudhiṣṭhira, thinking of making you the main personality at the sacrifice, wants to perform a *rājasūya* sacrifice.

[33] Kṛṣṇa said with a smile, "Is he going to perform a *rājasūya* sacrifice with great joy out of internal love for me?"

[34] Nārada said, “He desires the wealth of Brahmā by the sacrifice.”

[35] Kṛṣṇa again said with a smile, “Does he desire to go to Satyaloka by performing sacrifice with material desires?”

[36] Nārada said, “No, no, but with a desire to attain you.”

[37] Kṛṣṇa said, “Who says that I am Brahmā (*parameṣṭhi*)?”

[38] Nārada said, “You are called thus by Śukadeva in the story of Sudāma:

After saying this, the Supreme Lord (*parameṣṭhinaḥ*) ate one palmful and was about to eat a second when the devoted goddess Rukmiṇī took hold of his hand.” SB 10.81.10

[39] Kṛṣṇa said, “So Yudhiṣṭhira has desire?”

[40] Nārada said, “No, no, He saw your super-human opulence. When you came to his house, he was embarrassed and underwent suffering. He did not have anything suitable for you.”

[41] Kṛṣṇa said, “How will he get wealth from the *rājasūya* sacrifice? Only kings can perform this sacrifice. Wealth and the sacrifice are both hard to achieve.”

[42] Nārada said, “You must permit the sacrifice. Then everything will be achieved happily.

If you approve, you will go. And wherever you go, all things are achieved on receiving your glance.” ||29||

[43] When Kṛṣṇa heard Nārada’s words and looked at all the people, no one permitted him to go, but instead they wanted him to kill Jarāsandha. Seeing the assembly,

favorable for his welfare, gathered there, and knowing that Nārada had come to see his opulence in Dvārakā, intelligent Kṛṣṇa suddenly rose from his seat. Seeing that ordinary person had gone home and that only ministers remained, Kṛṣṇa glanced at Uddhava. Though Uddhava was knowledgeable of the six objects (*artha, dharma, kāma, mokṣa, tattvaṛtha,* and *lokārtha*) he stood in front of Kṛṣṇa like a fool. Uddhava folded his hands and then Kṛṣṇa with respect spoke to him with the consent of the others:

“All of us have two eyes each. You have special eyes. For that reason we serve you with faith at all times. Now we have two paths. We ask you which path should we take and which we should not. Please explain to us which is better. O intelligent Uddhava! Do not be reserved.” ||30||

Though Kṛṣṇa knew everything, he asked which path was better to glorify his devotee.

Though he knew his own glory, Uddhava, as it were, put the order on his head, and with humility began advising. ||31||

[44] First he considered in his mind: “Kṛṣṇa thinks of everyone’s happiness. Now he wants to give happiness to Yudhiṣṭhira and the kings imprisoned by Jarāsandha. I will produce a solution of happiness of all where both parties are happy. Then I will speak.” ||32||

[45] Then Uddhava spoke aloud:

The minister is not expected to perfect the power of you whose *prakṛti* produces earth and other elements. ||33||

Some serve the king and some serve you, by *sāma, dāna, bheda* and *daṇḍa.* The first type of people knows

material goals. The second type knows spiritual goals. ||34||

Artha, dharma, kāma and *mokṣa* are dependent on you. What use do persons knowledgeable of good conduct have for the first three? The final goal of kings is simply increase, destruction and maintenance. ||35||

O Lord! You have unlimited powers. Creation, maintenance and destruction are nothing for you. Just for fun, you beg your ministers for advice. ||36||

Since you have the six qualities of God, what use are the six measures of king[13]?

O Govinda! You follow proper conduct because you desire to follow the customs of the world. ||37||

Avoiding other actions, first do these two: free the kings from suffering and have the sacrifice performed. ||38||

O Lord! By killing Jarāsandha, the two acts will be perfected. The kings will be freed and the conquest of the directions for performing the sacrifice will be accomplished. ||39||

Just as the sun divides two fortnights of the night moon and quells its power, you cut down Jarāsandha and quell his power. ||40||

But you should not kill Jarāsandha yourself since you have rejected him many times with force already. ||41||

O conqueror of the directions! Those who have conquered the directions should perform the sacrifice. Therefore you should engage the Pāṇḍavas, who desire to perform the sacrifice, in killing him. ||42||

Among them, Bhīma has the strength of ten-thousand elephants. He desires to fight with Jarāsandha in hand to

hand combat. It is not necessary to conquer him using troops. ||43||

You need a hundred *akṣauhiṇīs* in fighting him, but the sacrifice cannot be accomplished in this manner by killing him. Hopes for the sacrifice will be checked. ||44||

O intelligent Kṛṣṇa! The killing of Jarāsandha by Bhīma will accomplish everything. I have given advice as you have inspired me. ||45||

Bhīma is strong and Uddhava is a good advisor. Taking these two famous qualities, I give you advice. ||46||

As the body does not work without the *antaryāmī*, killing Jarāsandha cannot be accomplished without you, even with millions of troops, advisors, instruments or weapons. ||47||

The enemy should be killed by a trick. This is the rule of conduct. Thus there should be deception in carrying out his killing. ||48||

Since he who wants to kill you and pretends to respect *brāhmaṇas,* we should disguise ourselves as *brāhmaṇas.* ||49||

Thinking of fighting you and Balarāma, he surrounded you with armies. The fool did not think of hand to hand combat. ||50||

If he fights in single combat to show the world his truthfulness, he will be cheated, thinking we are *brāhmaṇas.* ||51||

Therefore we should be deceptive at this time by disguising ourselves as *brāhmaṇas*. Putting ferocious Bhīma in front, you will be victorious with Arjuna. ||52||

[46] What more can be said? All fighters and advisors support you. All this is mere pastimes for you.

[47] Nanda said, “Then what happened?”

[48] The messengers said, “Just as those proficient in *dharma* worship the words of the Vedas, all praised Uddhava’s auspicious plan.” ||53||

[49] When the people of Vraja felt pain that Kṛṣṇa was involved in such cheating actions, they began to think. One wise person present then spoke to pacify them: “This will increase the fame of Uddhava, who understands Kṛṣṇa’s mood and powers, among those who appreciate his powers of advising.”

[50] Nanda said, “Then what happened?”

[51] The messengers said, “We two messengers then came here while lamenting in misery for the future, while reviewing events till the present. Two other messengers will come with the remaining news.”

[52] Having concluded Madhukaṇṭha said, “O Nanda! We were filled with remorse on remembering the pain you felt in separation from Kṛṣṇa previously. Let that remorse be gone! Kṛṣṇa with the complexion of a new cloud, wearing yellow cloth, and a peacock feather, holding a flute in his hand, has appeared. But you are filled with pain by that?” ||54||

[53] Having given happiness to Nanda, the reciter went to the assembly of Rādhā and Mādhava and spoke:

O Rādhā! Previously there were great devotees, and in the future there will be great devotees. Now at present, there are great devotees. But Uddhava is most intelligent, for in the Yadu assembly he made Kṛṣṇa remember you and made him hear your name in verses like the following. ||55||

[54] gāyanti te viśada-karma gṛheṣu devyo
rājñāṃ sva-śatru-vadham ātma-vimokṣaṇaṃ ca |
gopyaś ca kuñjara-pater janakātmajāyāḥ
pitroś ca labdha-śaraṇo munayo vayaṃ ca ||

In their homes, the godly wives of the imprisoned kings sing of your noble deeds–about how you will kill their husbands' enemy and deliver them. The *gopīs* also sing your glories–how you killed Śaṅkhacūḍa and delivered them from his hands. The surrendered souls sing of your killing the enemy of Gajendra. The sages sing of your killing the enemy of Sītā. We Yadus sing of your killing the enemies of Vasudeva and Devakī. SB 10.71.9

[55] The meaning is this:

All the devotees sing at all times about your spotless activities for killing the sinful and protecting the righteous. Understand the present situation. The wives of the kings, situated in their homes, feeling humble before you, offer prayers, singing of freedom for their husbands from the enemy and their own liberation from separation from the Lord. Giving a general prayer of liberation for their husbands, they announce their own desire of freedom from separation, displaying the *gopīs'* mood secretly. Suppressing hopes of destroying the enemy in the form of separation from Kṛṣṇa, the *gopīs* instead sing of the killing of Śaṅkhacūḍa, and then their own liberation from that demon–even though the event has long passed. The protection of their husbands and their wives is reinforced by the other examples. We sing of these two subjects (killing demons and protection of selves) for the different devotees in your different births in this world. We will sing whenever the queens and the *gopīs* reveal their desires for having demons killed and

being protected by you. Like the queens, the *gopīs'* desires should be fulfilled. Similarly the surrendered souls sing of your killing the enemy of Gajendra and saving him, the sages sing of your killing the enemy of Sītā and saving her, and we Yadus sing of your killing the enemies of Vasudeva and Devakī and saving them.

[56] Madhukaṇṭha concluded:

"At this time I am telling an ancient story about Kṛṣṇa in which the *gopīs* suffered separation. But look! Whether today or tomorrow, sorrow is clearly present, but that sorrow through separation, thoroughly nourishes the bliss of *sambhoga* (meeting)." ||56||

[57] After this, the two reciters along with all the people returned to their residences and Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa, going to their temple of bliss, enjoyed pastimes together.

Chapter Twenty-Six

Freeing the Kings Imprisoned by Jarāsandha

[1] In Nanda’s morning assembly, in the presence of Kṛṣṇa, Snigdhakaṇṭha began speaking.

[2] Another two messengers arrived and spoke:

O Nanda! Please listen. Following Uddhava’s advice and not that of others, Kṛṣṇa prepared to leave with his associates for Indraprastha.

[3] First he asked for the permission of the elders of Dvārakā. He established Ugrasena to protect the city with the help of Balarāma and Pradumnya, along with fierce troops.

[4] After worshiping Nārada who left through the skyway, he went to his house and then prepared to depart.

[5] When he took out elephants, horses, troops and attendants, the ocean’s powers became silent in face of the loud sounds and numbers of the troops. Moving forward with flags, they appeared to move quickly, not slowly. The groups of bards filled with singers, like an array of troops, gave joy to all.

Archers, lancers, men bearing clubs, joined by swordsmen and axe men marched in procession. ||1||

Musical instruments, flags, foot soldiers, elephants, chariots, the best of women, various vehicles, small carts

and palanquins moved along with camels bearing huge loads. People in the distance thought it was a huge ocean. And those within the procession could not even determine its size. ||2||

The sons of his aunt, the best among the Kurus, were the cause of the affectionate request to go to Indraprastha. Nārada was the cause of information concerning the sacrifice.

When the Yadus gathered to depart, he called the imprisoned kings' messenger who did not identify himself first but instead began to praise Kṛṣṇa. Kṛṣṇa spoke to him with affectionate words. ||3||

rāja-dūtam uvācedaṃ bhagavān prīṇayan girā |
mā bhaiṣṭa dūta bhadraṃ vo ghātayiṣyāmi māgadham ||

With pleasing words the Lord addressed the messenger sent by the kings: "My dear messenger, I wish all good fortune to you. I shall arrange for the killing of King Magadha. Do not fear." SB 10.71.19

Spreading his moon-like effulgence on the population he quickly arrived at the kingdom of the Kurus for the sacrifice of Yudhiṣṭhira. ||4||

[6] Nanda said, "Then what happened?"

[7] The messengers said, "Taking Kṛṣṇa's permission, we came to your lotus feet. But messengers following his path will come soon."

[8] After saying this, the messengers spoke of other news concerning Kṛṣṇa:

As the moon, spreading its rays, expands the ocean, when Kṛṣṇa, spreading his rays arrived at Indraprastha, he made the city joyful. ||5||

What to speak of his rays arriving at the city, his rays lit up the king of Indraprastha, making the whole universe joyful. ||6||

The armies of the Pāṇḍavas and Yadus marched together. The two expanded like a huge wave in the ocean. ||7||

The Pāṇḍavas and Kṛṣṇa stood with unblinking eyes to relish each other's forms on meeting. ||8||

Meeting of people whose hearts are the same infuses *prema* everywhere. The *prema* generated when they met made everyone stunned, with tears in their eyes. ||9||

The *prema* on meeting Kṛṣṇa produced obstacles for certain. Look! Surpassing the stunned state arising from joy, that *prema* on meeting produced zeal. ||10||

Affectionate people understood their *prema* by their profuse tears, and could understand it by their affectionate words. ||11||

Kṛṣṇa melted and Yudhiṣṭhira lowered himself with humility. Why should Kṛṣṇa not join with him since water flows to a low place? ||12||

Though Kṛṣṇa met with each of the Pāṇḍavas, let his meeting with Arjuna be supreme, since it made everyone's hairs stand on end! ||13||

The meeting of Kṛṣṇa with the Pāṇḍavas is not astonishing to us. Such meetings were also seen between Kṛṣṇa and the associates of the Pāṇḍavas (Vidura). ||14||

Kṛṣṇa collected blessings from the *brāhmaṇas* because of humility and from bards because of proper conduct, and he gave blessings to all. ||15||

When Kṛṣṇa entered the city, Yudhiṣṭhira performed auspicious rites for his well-being. Since his entrance created auspiciousness, the whole universe became auspicious. ||16||

When Kṛṣṇa entered Indraprastha, what to speak of everyone else, the women confined to the inner chambers gave up their shyness. Who then could maintain self-control by any means? ||17||

When Draupadī, surrounded by queens, entered the inner chambers, from outside the chambers we could hear each of the statements long or short. ||18||

“Look! Look! My eyes are shedding tears.” “Shower the flowers. Shower the flowers.” “Make it auspicious with showers of flowers and popped rice.” ||19||

When the Pāṇḍavas became inundated with bliss, Kuntī pampered Kṛṣṇa affectionately as her son. Understanding her order, Draupadī began serving the queens like Rukmiṇī. ||20||

[9 - 10] Hearing all this from the palace managers and then taking permission of Kṛṣṇa, we came here quickly.

This was the statement of the two messengers. Two other messengers then began speaking:

Worshiped with faith, Kṛṣṇa of renowned fame stayed there some days as a new guest. Creating beauty in their hall filled with righteous people just by sitting there, surrounded by his brothers, Yudhiṣṭhira, who was endowed with the best character, made a request to Kṛṣṇa.

[11 - 12] Though he had desires for a great kingdom as described previously, he did not express this. He

requested, “Destroyer of suffering! O cousin! With some hesitation I am asking for your permission.”

[13] Kṛṣṇa said, “Please make your request.”

[14] Yudhiṣṭhira said, “The *devatās* are your *vibhūtis* but we are only half the strength of the Kurus. I desire to perform a sacrifice. O master! Please help us accomplish this.” ||21||

[15] Kṛṣṇa said, “Your desire will be accomplished nicely. But it is necessary to determine how the sacrifice will be accomplished.”

[16] Yudhiṣṭhira said, “They say the three worlds are pleased by the *rājasūya* sacrifice because the Vedas say this is the king of sacrifices.” ||22||

[17 - 18] Kṛṣṇa said with a smile, “O king! I have affection for all beings except those who destroy the Vedas. If one satisfies me, the *devatās* are satisfied. Since you always satisfy me, it is nothing for you to satisfy the *devatās.* All the wealth you need will be obtained for the sacrifice. It will be easily obtained, though it is difficult for others. Some other happiness will occur, for the sacrifice will satisfy me since the moon of your untiring fame will give joy to the three worlds. The ingredients will be under the control of your desire. I will increase them abundantly. You will destroy all enemies and conquer all kings. All others will be under your control. Make all efforts and begin the sacrifice.” ||23||

[19] In this way he placed in the king his own power. The brothers assumed the forms of Indra, Vāyu and other *devatās.* He increased the strength of the brothers by his words, actions and his powers.

[20] Yudhiṣṭhira developed a happy face by Kṛṣṇa’s power, and was joyful with his brothers who had developed all powers. It was seen that he made Lakṣmī of this universe reside within his body.

[21] Two more messengers arrived and told the remainder of the story:

The brothers sent to conquer the world returned and reported to Yudhiṣṭhira. They gave him the wealth. After Kṛṣṇa had kept Jarāsandha far away to teach him a lesson, he created joy for Yudhiṣṭhira through the advice of Uddhava. ||24 - 25||

[22] Yudhiṣṭhira, like Uddhava, knew the glories of Kṛṣṇa.

[23] Nanda said, “Then what happened?”

[24] The two messengers said:

> We are ashamed and afraid to say:
>
> *bhīmaseno ’rjunaḥ kṛṣṇo brahma-liṅga-dharās trayaḥ |*
> *jagmur giri-vrajaṃ tāta bṛhadratha-suto yataḥ ||*
>
> Bhīmasena, Arjuna and Kṛṣṇa disguised themselves as *brāhmaṇas* and went to Girivraja, my dear King, where the son of Bṛhadratha was to be found. SB 10.72.16

[25] Nanda said in fear, “Then what happened?”

[26] The two messengers said, “Then we came here.”

[27] When some time had passed in fear concerning the news of Kṛṣṇa, another two messengers came and spoke “O Nanda! Do not be agitated. Jarāsandha has definitely been killed.”

[28] Everyone said, “Tell us what happened! Tell us!”

[29] The messengers said:

When Kṛṣṇa, Arjuna and Bhīma went dressed as *brāhmaṇas* everyone in that state accepted them as such. ||26||

Wearing attractive sacred threads, broad *tilaka* made of holy earth, clean, white cloth, *kuśa* rings and carrying scriptures, they went here and there chanting the Upaniṣads, with Kṛṣṇa as the teacher and the other two as students. These three were worshiped by the people. ||27||

[30] The people of Vraja asked while laughing, “We know that Bhīma is a voracious eater. How did they supply him enough food?”

[31 - 32] The messengers while laughing said, “His body made arrangements so that there were always people to keep feeding him. It is not necessary to explain the various foods he ate. Eventually they came to Māgadha and, having been worshiped by the people of Girivraja, appearing remarkable in dress from their garlands and sandalwood, they wandered about like learned scholars. At the time of being welcomed, wearing *brāhmaṇa* dress, they conquered all the citizens by their charisma. The remarkable team went into the palace, putting Kṛṣṇa in front, and approached the king.” ||28||

[33 - 34] Nanda said, “Then what happened?”

The messengers said:

Understanding they were *brāhmaṇas* and proud that he was a server of *brāhmaṇas*, he offered respects with pride. Internally hating him, the three externally offered blessings, seeming to make him prosperous, while they actually became stronger. They said, “O Jarāsandha! Holding a club equipped with a *brahmāstra* having

intolerable strength, you are happy among all your friends.” ||29||

[35] Everyone said while laughing, “Then what happened?”

[36] The messengers said:

Hearing this and then looking, Jarāsandha had doubts about their bodies since they had *kṣatriya* limbs and deep *kṣatriya* voices: “Not only do they seem to be imitation *kṣatriyas,* but I seem to recognize them.”

[37] Considering in another way, he thought to himself: “Whether they are *brāhmaṇas* or *kṣatriyas* or dressed in disguise, I should respect them since I desire *dharma* and courage.” ||30||

.

[38] Desiring to disclose their disguise he spoke: “Who are you respectable gentlemen? Why do you wear garlands and sandalwood though you are dressed as *brāhmaṇas*?”

“Though he may recognize us we should ignore what he asks”. Thinking in this way Kṛṣṇa said, “We are guests. Moreover, it is not a fault to wear garlands as ornaments. It said that for persons without ornaments, garlands are ornaments.” ||31 - 32||

[39] Jarāsandha said, “Let that be. O servants! Please give them food.”

[40] Kṛṣṇa said, “We did not come for food alone. Why would we come so far to you just for food? Hariścandra and others gave everything away but remained calm. What to speak of you, you are so eager to give in charity. We have come to see you fight. Your fame for being

fearless in fighting is well known in your lineage." ||33 - 35||

[41] Hearing Kṛṣṇa make this request with a smile, Jarāsandha considered that he should give away even his life without lamentation. Taking them to be *brāhmaṇas* and understanding the request, Jarāsandha, the main despiser of Kṛṣṇa, spoke, honoring them as *brāhmaṇas*:

"O learned *brāhmaṇas,* choose whatever you wish. I will give it to you, even if it is my own head." (SB 10.72.27)

[42] Desiring to kill Jarāsandha, Kṛṣṇa, noting his words as a good sign, spoke of what he should do, "If you desire, then fight with us one by one."

[43] Nanda said, "Then what happened?"

[44] The messengers said:

When Jarāsandha looked at him with astonishment and a smile, Kṛṣṇa spoke again:

"Why are you so astonished? Do not think that we are only *brāhmaṇas*. You desired to give, thinking that we wanted only food. But we are *kṣatriyas* and desire to fight. That is what we shall receive from you! We come with skill in fighting, not for begging.

[45] When Jarāsandha heard this and looked at him with astonishment, Kṛṣṇa spoke again:

"Why do you look at us with doubt? Look and recognize us! This person, fearful as Rudra with pride, the strongest among all men, is Bhīma. This person, as courageous as Kārtavīrya Arjuna, is his brother Arjuna. I am Kṛṣṇa, born of Vasudeva, like a lion that kills a young elephant."

[46] Laughing, Jarāsandha spoke to the three who had come without fear: "I do not want to fight with you since

you went to live within the sea because of fear of me. I do not want to fight with Arjuna, of worthless qualities, who takes shelter of his bow because he is weak. I desire to fight with Bhīma, Arjuna's brother, who has no fear and who I somewhat respect."

[47] Kṛṣṇa said with joy, "You have accepted what we wanted you to accept, since you are blind– though you can see Bhīma's great power in front of you." ||36||

[48] Thinking himself courageous, Jarāsandha took up two clubs, a useless attempt to give himself some satisfaction. As desired by Bhīma, he gave one to Bhīma and then entered the arena.

[49] They began to attack each other with the clubs. Because they were both as strong as Indra, they appeared to be fighting with thunderbolts. The clashing clubs made a sound "*chat chat"* and the clubs did not fall from their hands. They were like elephants attacking each other with clubs.

[50] They traced circles as they fought with the clubs, as if dancing in the arena. Till midday the two fought, with neither able to win, each uselessly trying reverse tactics and throwing punches as well. By the glance of Kṛṣṇa, Bhīma reached the summit of his strength. But he could find no way to defeat Jarāsandha. Then, as a hint, Kṛṣṇa tore a tree branch in two and Bhīma understood what to do. He then threw his opponent down on the ground, just as an elephant throws *śaivala* plants, producing happiness in Kṛṣṇa and other allies.

He threw him on the ground forcefully in order to punish him and firmly grasped his two thighs. Graceful as a dancer, he split him apart from the waist to the top of the head just as a weaver tears cloth. ||37||

[51] In tearing him apart Bhīma said, “I am not Balarāma or Kṛṣṇa. I am the elder brother of Arjuna. O Jarāsandha! Why should I mercifully keep you on the earth?” ||38||

[52 - 53] The demons said, “Oh! This is misfortune for Jarāsandha!” The *devatās* said, “Oh! Good riddance to Jarāsandha.” In this way everyone shouted, “Oh!” Kṛṣṇa and Arjuna, thinking that they were victorious without fail, worshiped Bhīma.

[54] Acting as if worried that the enemies would attack, Kṛṣṇa took possession of a golden chariot encrusted with gems which was standing on the palace road, accompanied by horses and weapons, and, mounting it with Bhīma and Arjuna, stood there attentively with the flag of Garuḍa flying.

[55] Vasu had obtained this chariot from Indra and then Jarāsandha had obtained it. It was thus called “the great chariot.”

[56] Nanda said, “Then what happened?”

[57] The messengers said, “Seeing that the citizens were lamenting, Kṛṣṇa along with Arjuna and Bhīma pacified them by installing Jarāsandha’s son Sahadeva as the king.”

[58] Determined to find the kings imprisoned by Jarāsandha, Kṛṣṇa, the ocean of mercy, found them locked in a mountain cave. Freeing them and looking at them, Kṛṣṇa could not speak for some time.

As a father sheds tears for his sons, Kṛṣṇa shed tears for the kings who were hungry, afflicted with pain, without luster, wearing old clothes, and bearing withered faces. This was not the only auspicious act of feeling affection

for his devotees, for in every *yuga* he feels such affection for his fixed devotees. ||39||

[59] By the mercy of Kṛṣṇa the millions of difficulties that the kings underwent in the prison were removed. The kings imprisoned by Jarāsandha gave up their exhaustion on seeing his form with their eyes, on feeling the touch of his radiance with their skin, on smelling his delightful fragrance with their noses, on hearing his attractive words with their ears, on tasting his sweetness with their tongues. Their faith reached such heights that they forgot that they had been imprisoned. ||40||

[60] Nanda said, “Then what happened?”

[61] The messengers said:

The ocean of mercy then engaged waves of servants in caring for the kings by arranging their baths and giving them fine clothing.

The kings bathed in joyful tears, dressed in the bright clothing of their luster, and decorated themselves with the ornaments of hairs standing on end. Having attained Kṛṣṇa and having no desire for anyone else, they began praising Kṛṣṇa. ||41||

[62] Joyful on attaining his order and understanding his special mercy on them, they became effulgent on bathing and eating. Accepting the kings as his own relatives, he gave them hospitality. He gave them elephants, horses, chariots and foot soldiers and sent them home.

[63] The members of their assembly and the residents were astonished to see the kings with their previous power after a long time and recognized them. All the relatives and friends, tasting the happiness from the faces of the kings who had received Kṛṣṇa’s mercy,

understood that the kings were pleased by their good fortune.

[64] Nanda said, “Please describe how the three dressed as *brāhmaṇas* entered into the city of the Kurus.”

[65] The messengers said:

On the road they cast off their disguises and Sahadeva gave them other clothing with devotion. In those clothes they went to Indraprastha.

When they reached their dear home, they each blew their conches. The two taking shelter of the one spread the universe with his glory. ||42||

When Kṛṣṇa, Bhīma and Arjuna, who had defeated Jarāsandha, arrived, they approached Yudhiṣṭhira, by first coming to the city which became joyful on hearing of their arrival. ||43||

On hearing Kṛṣṇa’s assistance in attaining victory, Yudhiṣṭhira covered the glorification of that friendship by his gravity, but his profuse tears covered his gravity. His gravity was a normal quality and his tears were manifested from strong *prema.* How can the two be easily compared? ||44||

[66] Nanda said, “How did they get to Magadha?”

[67] The messengers said, “He went on a path between the Gaṅgā and Yamunā, far from you. You should remain here always. He will come here.”

[68] Everyone said, “Oh! Oh! We always hear that, but we never see it.”

[69] The messengers said, “We understand from Uddhava that it will not be long. After the events were all concluded, quickly we came here.”

[70] After telling what the messengers had said, Snigdhakaṇṭha said, “Do not make haste on hearing that Kṛṣṇa is coming soon. He has already come and is here now. The story of his coming will be told later.” ||45||

[71] In the assembly of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa, the reciter spoke:

You understood the message that was given to you by Uddhava:

The vow Kṛṣṇa made at Kurukṣetra remained alive in his heart. When I was arranging the *rājasūya* sacrifice and the killing of Jarāsandha, I mentioned your name in my advice. I could understand from his eyes that he had deep love in his heart for you at that time. ||46||

[72] Just as men afraid of material existence attain relief on hearing about Brahman, by hearing about his *prema* for you, you remove all suffering arising from the impossibility of attaining him. Now the result has been achieved.

O Rādhā! Previously the hot sun of separation dried up your body. This is well known. Now that sun, by the glance of the cloud Kṛṣṇa, has softened your stone-like body and made it blossom. ||47||

[73] Having produced happiness in all, the two reciters returned to their quarters with the others while Kṛṣṇa relaxed with Rādhā.

Chapter Twenty-seven

The Rājasūya Sacrifice

[1] In the morning Madhukaṇṭha began to relate the rest of the story in a sweet manner:

On another day when two messengers arrived and were asked by Nanda, they began to spread sweetness by another story.

[2] The hall made by Maya-dānava for the *rājasūya* sacrifice was brilliant. The Paṇḍavas, Yadus and many *brāhmaṇas* stayed there for an extended period, engaging in friendly exchanges with happy smiles. With humility, Yudhiṣṭhira, following the rules, began praising Kṛṣṇa:

Giving instructions to your devotees in order to institute your orders, you become happy on understanding that they understand your orders. ||1||

Though you are dependent on your devotees, your powers do not decrease. Because of your devotees you melt, just as the moon melts the moonstone. ||2||

As the lotus blooms in the sun, we become joyful when you appear. Therefore order us what to do. ||3||

[3] Kṛṣṇa, giving permission for the sacrifice he had promised, gave them special inspiration: “At this sacrifice you will consider me the most worshipable. Whether Vedic or secular, all your actions please me.” ||4||

[4] The king, folding his hands attractively, then requested: “All the *brāhmaṇas* among whom only a rare person attains Svarga have attended this sacrifice, greedy to attain you. Who can count the number of kings present? If you and the *brāhmaṇas* are pleased with this sacrifice, I am like a puppet. It is all accomplished by you.” ||5||

[5] Kṛṣṇa said, “All these *brāhmaṇas* have sincere, unlimited affection for me. Tinged with their affection, you mutually increase the affection. Therefore according to the rules start the procedures.”

[6] Meeting with the assembly, Yudhiṣṭhira stood up, folded his hands and spoke sincerely:

“O members of the assembly! Since Kṛṣṇa has accepted this sacrifice, it has been accepted by you. We as a part of this assembly serve your acceptance.” ||6||

[7] This assembly with the presence of Kṛṣṇa, surpassing Indra’s assembly with the presence of Vāmana, in which all kings are present along with Yudhiṣṭhira, rose to their feet with devotion in unison. Seeing this, all the sages also rose with awe in their hearts.

[8] Nanda said, “Who were the sages?”

[9] The messengers said, “How can one even count the numbers! At the sacrifice there were Vaśiṣṭha, Vāmadeva, Trita, Asita, Kaśyapa, Bharadvāja, Gautama, Parāśara, and Maitreya. Vyāsa, equal to Nārāyaṇa, made everything perfect.”

[10] Everyone said, “This is not astonishing for Yudhiṣṭhira, best of kings, since he has attained the rays of the face of Kṛṣṇa, more attractive than a blue lotus,

and thus makes everyone happy by the beauty of his face.”

[11] Hearing this, Nanda’s throat became choked and could not speak for a few moments. Then he spoke with difficulty, “Then what did Yudhiṣṭhira do and say?”

[12] The messengers said:

Yudhiṣṭhira touched his jeweled crown to the lotus feet of all the sages and prayed for success in the sacrifice from those sages who had realized Brahman.

[13 - 14] All the sages together said, “You should pray to Śiva and Brahmā, not us, for success in your sacrifice. You know the activities and attain happiness from them in an astonishing manner. What more has to be said about your actions? But you have prayed to us. That is not astonishing. What is astonishing is your desire for this sacrifice. In doing actions, you have strong faith in the *brāhmaṇas.* As one can see present results of work, one can also see results which will appear in the future. Therefore sit properly on the seat and we will deliberate on the matter.” ||7 - 8||

[15] Nanda said, “Why was Nārada not listed among the sages present?”

[16] The messengers said, “Nārada is interested in seeing the interesting pastimes of the Lord, and not actions of *karma* sacrifices.”

[17] Nanda said with a sigh, “Then what happened?”

[18] The messengers said:

When he was comfortably seated, the sages, though omniscient, at the request of Yudhiṣṭhira, asked the most respected astrologers for an auspicious day for the sacrifice.

[19] When the proper date was known, Yudhiṣṭhira, taking Kṛṣṇa's permission, announced to the *brāhmaṇas* the officiating priests according to the different Vedas. Through messengers he requested that cruel Dhṛtarāṣṭra and his sons, Bhīṣma, Kṛpācārya, Droṇācārya and others attend. What can be said? All the *brāhmaṇas* and even their paid workers were invited by letter. With proper respect being given to everyone who had assembled before the sacrifice, there was great festivity in the gathering of great souls including the best of the Vṛṣṇi warriors and Balarāma. What more can be said? Let the arrangements be described. Apart from those who were invited, it was noticed that Śiva and Brahmā attended this sacrifice with great hope of experiencing the glorious pastimes of Kṛṣṇa. Accepting the advice that you Vraja people would not want to see the sacrifice, you were not there. Others would thus conclude that Kṛṣṇa was indifferent to you since you did not come, though you were his son.

[20] When all the *brāhmaṇas* and kings were engaged in work for the sacrifice, out of pride it could not be decided who would accept the task of washing the feet of the guests. Thinking over this topic, finally Kṛṣṇa, the best of the best, the best of your lineage, who does acts for his devotees that are not considered respectable, accepted the task.

[21] Hearing this, all the people of Vraja thought to themselves, "Kṛṣṇa will certainly not give up people like us."

[22] They then asked aloud, "Then what happened?"

[23 - 24] The messengers said, "When the *brāhmaṇas* plowed the sacred sacrificial area with a golden plough

smeared with colors, and everyone became blissful, humans looked at this action with a smile. Though they were not learned in the actions of the sacrifice, they were initiated into its procedures. When all the kings were initiated, they all watched but did not examine the items carefully. For such action (mere looking) is accepted in all the rule books.

[25] At the sacrifice, some were amazed on seeing the collection of gold utensils. Some were amazed by seeing Nārada, Indra and the Kumāras. Some were amazed on seeing Brahmā and Siva. Some were amazed by Kṛṣṇa's strong power to attract all. All were amazed by Kṛṣṇa's astonishing beauty which satisfied even the liberated souls. ||9||

[26] In that situation while all remained in that perfect state, they began offering oblations into the sacrifice. O Nanda! When the *brāhmaṇas* offered ghee into the fire according to Vedic rules those offerings were offered to your son's opulence. Though the people saw ghee offered into fire, it was actually an offering to your son. ||10||

[27] At the sacrifice where *soma* was drunk, another decision had to be made to establish the principal person of the sacrifice among the attendees. Because of the many people present there were many opinions. When all became silent in establishing their opinions, others would speak in various ways. When nothing could be decided, Yudhiṣṭhira, holding the articles for worship in his hand, became disturbed. Then Sahadeva, concluding that Kṛṣṇa was the best among all, after listening to the assembled sages and *devatās* spoke to them:

All the sages have attended the sacrifice by the glance of Kṛṣṇa alone. What to speak of the *devatās,* Śiva and

Brahmā attended by Kṛṣṇa's mere glance. To give up worship of Kṛṣṇa and decide some other object of worship will bring destruction to those who select. The sacrifice cannot be successful. ||11||

Kṛṣṇa is the soul of Brahmā and Śiva and lord of the Yadus. Everyone who is looking at me, please behold him with your eyes, while you smile with hairs standing on end! If Kṛṣṇa is selected as the person worthy of worship, all will be satisfied. ||12||

[28] Understanding the bad intentions of the demons present, he again spoke: "One should not take the opinion of all those who oppose Kṛṣṇa, who is the soul of all beings, for they are all the lowest of creatures." ||13||

[29] When the enemies became ferocious with angry faces, he spoke in a loud voice: "Since I am a junior how can I describe their audacity in the assembly? My left foot prays for the heads of the opposing parties." ||14||

[30] As the rumbling of clouds gives joy to the peacock, his words increased the joyful uproar of the assembled *devatās* who were attending the festival. After he spoke, Yudhiṣṭhira, like the rainy season which subdues the lizards (the enemy), satisfied Kṛṣṇa, the root of all beings, and thus satisfied all the branches (*brāhmaṇas*) and his supporters.

Then Yudhiṣṭhira worshiped Kṛṣṇa with devotion. When he placed his head on Kṛṣṇa's lotus feet, his hairs stood on end and he began weeping. ||15||

Seeing the king worship Kṛṣṇa, everyone shouted continually, "Victory" and "All respects to you." Before the *devatās* could release flowers, the flowers fell from their hands because of trembling. ||16||

It was suitable that the *devatās,* drinkers of *soma,* praised the Lord and it was suitable that the demons, drinkers of wine, criticized him, for when they spoke their *guṇas* could be understood. ||17||

[31] Though aware of the respectable nature of the assembly and aware of the respect given to Kṛṣṇa by all, Śiśupāla began speaking. He could not at all tolerate the eminence of Kṛṣṇa. His nature was to hate the Lord. Throwing his arms in the air as if he were about to fly, the arrogant Śiśupāla spoke while Kṛṣṇa could hear:

“How can this despicable cowherd Kṛṣṇa receive the first worship at this sacrifice where Brahmā, *devatās* and sages like Vaśiṣṭha, Vāmadeva and Kaśyapa, and the best of kings like me are present? He was not born from my uncle Vasudeva. How unfortunate that the Pāṇḍavas are giving this cowherd the first worship. Woe to the assembly! Woe to the sacrifice protected by Bhīṣma and other partial parties!” ||18||

[32] Nanda said, “Then what happened.”

[33] The messengers said:

Hearing him criticize Kṛṣṇa, the Pāṇḍavas, full of anger when their relatives did not hear such words, with eyes swollen and red, stood up ready to draw their swords, forgetting their vows of *dīkṣā.* ||19||

[34] When the knowers of scripture left the place on hearing the criticism, when Balarāma was restrained by the advice of Kṛṣṇa, and when the Pāṇḍavas took up their swords and shields though they were sanctified by *dīkṣa*, Kṛṣṇa prevented them from approaching Śiśupāla.

Kṛṣṇa had tolerated Śiśupāla’s criticism a hundred times because he had no pride. He liked to be called a

cowherd, for Brahmā carries the dust raised by his cows on his head. But when the Pāṇḍavas were insulted, your son took on a ferocious form and cut off the head of Śiśupāla with his *cakra.* ||20||

When the effulgence merged into beautiful Kṛṣṇa who was smiling, showers of flowers fell upon him while people watched in joy. What was astonishing was that the effulgence burst out from Śiśupāla's heart and merged into Kṛṣṇa's body. ||21||

[35] At that moment, Śiśupāla's supporters flew away like birds. Seeing this, the crowd spoke pleasant words:

Kṛṣṇa, who gives wealth to Indra, gave his kingdom to Ugrasena, Kaṃsa's father. Thus he has no pride and no anger at all. He destroyed Pūtanā and other in order to destroy their ignorance. ||22||

What to speak of giving the kingdom to Ugrasena and following his order, at the *rājasūya* Kṛṣṇa accepted the duty of washing the feet of all guests. ||23||

[36] When Śiśupāla was killed, Yudhiṣṭhira gave many gifts in charity, and after the sacrifice, to remove all faults, the final oblations and bathing rites were performed. Not only that, but all the *devatās, brāhmaṇas*, and everyone else were satisfied. He satisfied everyone except Duryodhana, who wanted to fight with him, for he was inimical to all those who supported Yudhiṣṭhira. Bewildered by the magical sacrificial hall built by Maya-dānava, he could not discriminate properly. He became disturbed on thinking that water was land and land was water when he was leaving the hall. Taking permission from Kṛṣṇa through Uddhava we came here quickly. What happened later other messengers will describe.

[37] Nanda said, “Did Kṛṣṇa, whose face gives happiness to all, remain in Indraprastha after the sacrifice?”

[38] The messengers said, “Yes. After sending all his associates back to Dvārakā he remained there with Balarāma. And when we desired to come to excellent Gokula and when he gave this sealed letter, like a boat in the ocean, to us , the two messengers, he said he would stay in Vraja for some months.”

[39] After relating the words of the messengers, Madhukaṇṭha said with choked voice, “After saying this they gave the letter to Nanda, who was trembling.”

[40] Because of agitation Nanda could not read the letter. He gave it to a priest. The priest then let him hear Kṛṣṇa’s words in the letter:

O father! I do not live in Indraprastha and I do not live in Dvārakā. I am living in this letter. Therefore keep this letter in your pocket. Instead of hopes, you will see me directly. ||24||

[41] After hearing this and taking it as the word of the Lord, having faith that the words were true, they passed several months which were like death for them. All the events mentioned have passed. Now see the present.

Hearing through us news about his long absence, Kṛṣṇa looks at the face of his father sitting beside him: “When will father wipe away his tears and see my face?” ||25||

[42] When the assembly heard these words, they saw what was described, Kṛṣṇa in person. With tears in his eyes, Kṛṣṇa fell at the feet of Nanda. With hairs standing on end, like the full moon, he met with all the people.

[43] The bards of Vraja began to sing.

O Kṛṣṇa! You became angry on hearing that Jarāsandha had imprisoned all the kings and then heard from Nārada of Yudhiṣṭhira's desire for the sacrifice. You became happy on hearing the excellent advice of Uddhava.

Before killing Jarāsandha you went to Yudhiṣṭhira's house. Lakṣmī was present in the assembly hall there, which was made suitable for you. On Uddhava's advice and with devotion for Yudhiṣṭhira, you, Bhīma and Arjuna disguised yourselves as *brāhmaṇas.*

You met Jarāsandha in disguise and asked him for battle. Wanting Bhīma to fight him, through Jarāsandha's words, you arranged for him to fight Bhīma. Having the two fight, you gave hints to Bhīma by tearing a branch many times and spread the pure glories of Bhīma.

You had Jarāsandha killed and freed the imprisoned kings. Taking great care in the affairs, you gave bliss to Yudhiṣṭhira. You arranged the sacrifice, and were the object of worship. You were tolerant when Śiśupāla criticized, but when he criticized Yudhiṣṭhira, you became angry. You then killed him with your *cakra*. The sacrifice was completed and you became famous. You then came here out of affection and made us happy, increasing our prosperity. ||26||

[44 - 45] He then spoke in the assembly of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa at night. Madhukaṇṭha said:

He sent to you a secret letter out of shame through Garuḍa:

I will not come till the enemies are destroyed. That was the limit I promised at Kurukṣetra. These assurances

appear constantly but they will quickly be fulfilled. ||27||

[46] Saying this, looking at Kṛṣṇa and then Rādhā, he said, “You know that it was impossible for Kṛṣṇa to come to Vraja from Dvārakā. Was it proper or improper, who can say? But now you have offered yourself completely to him, and he is controlled by you.” ||28||

[47] Hearing Madhukaṇṭha’s words, Rādhā, the essence of *prema,* experiencing directly the form of Kṛṣṇa, the cause of surprise, gave respect to the two reciters who had spoken sweetly and entered the house of pastimes with Kṛṣṇa, who was submissive to her will.

Chapter Twenty-eight

Destruction of Śālva

[1] As on previous mornings, Snigdhakaṇṭha pleased everyone by speaking.

[2] As long as Kṛṣṇa did not return, he sent messages from Indraprastha, which gave faith to Nanda. When Kṛṣṇa departed from Indraprastha and returned to Dvārakā, he could not enter the city. Two messengers came flying as quick as locusts to Vraja and informed Nanda.

“Coming to Dvārakā we could not enter the gate because the city was surrounded with a huge ream of smoke. Kṛṣṇa quickly entered first. But we heard from Dvārakā a loud, piercing cry. Kṛṣṇa, mounting his chariot entered the city and defeated the power of the smoke with his power, which was like the sun. We confirmed all this from the people who were outside the city.”

[3] Hearing this, and with pale faces, feeling pain in their hearts, Nanda and the others with sorrowful faces, immediately dispatched persons who could move quickly. They went, but while doing so, they could not reach the edge of Vraja. Overcome with grief, they remained motionless on the road. However, the news was true. After Kṛṣṇa stole Rukmiṇī, after the Vṛṣṇis made Jarāsandha and his allies disappear in shame, most cruel Śālva had made allies with Jarāsandha and others when

they pacified Śiśupāla who was expecting to marry Rukmiṇī.

[4] “Throwing my weapons while are like forest fires at the Yadus who cause us affliction, I will remove your shame, which is a like a person without clothing.” Making this vow, but blind to the *kṣatriya* vows, Śālva went off to perform severe austerities. Absorbing himself in austerities for Śiva, every night he ate a handful of ashes to please Śiva. Again and again he ate ashes to achieve his goal.

[5] He followed the accepted conduct with customary actions for future suffering. Śiva knew that he would die by offending Kṛṣṇa. Being easily pleased, Śiva came before Śālva to bestow a benediction after one year, in order that Kṛṣṇa would show his powers and in order to destroy the fault of glorifying those who do not follow surrendered souls. Knowing Śiva was pleased, the wicked Śālva asked for a magical, iron, aerial chariot made by Maya-Dānava that could not be pierced by the *devatās* and was unknown to the Yadus. But Śālva was afraid of Kṛṣṇa who had defeated Śiva when he sided with Bāṇa.

[6] When Śiśupāla had died, Śālva, his close friend, knowing that Kṛṣṇa was absent from Dvārakā, attacked the city. He flew around the city in a crooked fashion, and approached close, sometimes on the land and sometimes in the air, causing great disturbance to the city.

As the aerial vehicle approached Dvārakā, clouds of dust arising from its crooked movements mixing with small pieces of stone, trees, rocks, thunderbolts and snakes and fell from the sky to the ground in whirlwinds. All the

palaces along with their *devatās,* parks, walls, courtyards and gates began to crumble. ||1||

When the vehicle entered the city, Pradyumna faced the vehicle because everyone was fleeing. He said, “Do not be afraid.” Seeing him on his chariot, thinking he was Kṛṣṇa, they all became calm and stood there. ||2||

[7] Nanda said, “Did others assist this child?”

[8 - 10] Snigdhakaṇṭha said: Why would they not help?

He who is independent by qualification is the shelter of all others. In the Vedas the Lord is described as the shelter of the universe. ||3||

But Balarāma had gone to deliver invitations to the sacrifice, and arrived later at Indraprastha. This was described. If he had not gone there but remained at Dvārakā, by pulling his plough and whirling his auspicious pestle, he could have crushed the aerial vehicle quickly.

[11] Nanda said, “Did anyone attain fame by assisting Pradyumna?”

[12] Snigdhakaṇṭha said, “Gada, Sāmba, Sātyaki, and Cārudeṣṇa helped their younger brother. And a huge number headed by Akrūra, Hārdikya, Bhanuvinda, Śuka and Śaraṇa also helped.”

[13] Nanda said, “Then what happened?”

[14] Snigdhakaṇṭha said:

Just as he pierced the iron ship equipped with various weapons made by Māyā-dānava, he pierced Śālva also. Other Yadus also killed Śālva’s supporters. When the Yadus went to destroy the enemy, Dyumān hit Pradyumna on the chest with his club. ||4||

Seeing that his charioteer had taken him from the battle when he became confused by the sudden blow, Pradyumna upbraided the charioteer. ||5||

With his charioteer he then approached Dyumān again. He shredded the foe's limbs and chariot and smashed his head into a hundred pieces. ||6||

The troops of Śālva's supporters were thrashed and fell into an ocean of arrows fired by the Yadus. ||7||

[15] When Pradyumna fought with Dyumān for twenty-seven days and nights, people began seeing inauspicious signs such as comets. Taking the permission of elders like Dhṛtarāṣṭra, Kṛṣṇa returned to Dvārakā. Kṛṣṇa, destroyer of demon families, the best of all men, assigned Balarāma, an excellent fighter, to defend the city and went to fight quarrelsome, vicious Śālva, who made clouds cover the daylight with rumbling sounds. Performing pastimes, he made the day appear again.

Arriving at the battle, he was seen by all his relatives and by the enemies, for when the sun arrives in the east, everyone can clearly see it. ||8||

[16] Putting Pradyumna behind him, Śālva demolished many troops and threw a spear at Kṛṣṇa. When Dāruka covered Kṛṣṇa with his body, he aimed at Dāruka. ||9||

When Kṛṣṇa saw the spear approach like a huge comet, his arrows, like Rākṣasas flying in the air, swallowed it. ||10||

[17] Shooting sixteen arrows, Kṛṣṇa surrounded Śālva on all sides with the arrows. He looked like a tree covered with branches sprouting leaves. With his arrows Kṛṣṇa made his vehicle look like a forest of sponges. It was

surrounded with a host of evil enemy troops, who had emerged from the vehicle forward or backwards.

[18] After doing this, Kṛṣṇa thought: “My fighting spirit is not aroused by displays of unlimited knowledge and strength. I will assume a nature devoid of intelligence, like persons devoid of *bhakti.* I will act as if I am foolish and weak.”

Śukadeva has criticized those who declare that Kṛṣṇa was in ignorance because of his material *māyā*:

Such is the account given by some sages, O wise King, but those who speak in this illogical way are contradicting themselves, having forgotten their own previous statements. SB 10.77.30

[19] Kṛṣṇa then pretended to be indifferent and was touched by the arrogant arrows of Śālva. His bow fell from his hand. The onlookers shouted in dismay and Śālva praised himself. Kṛṣṇa then hit him with his club, reversing his previous self-glorification. But he did not kill him, in order to have some fun.

[20] Śālva then disappeared, spreading illusion by his power. A man dressed as a messenger of Devakī appeared and, approaching Kṛṣṇa, began speaking cruel words, “Śālva has taken your father and gone away.” Kṛṣṇa then showed that he was full of lamentation and unsteadiness. Śālva brought out from his aerial city someone resembling Vasudeva and cut off is head.

[21] Seeing this, not accepting this illusory figure, knowing that Śālva was in his vehicle from which he could not flee, Kṛṣṇa blocked his way and fought with him. Before fighting, Kṛṣṇa’s said, “O Śālva, endowed with illusory powers! Cheater! How many illusions do you produce in your war?”

[22] The fight:

Though he used all his powers and weapons to fight in all directions, Śālva's attempts became useless. He became the target of the tips of Kṛṣṇa's arrows. Though he had his armor and bow, with his head about to split, his future now appeared like his previous state–ashes. ||11||

Kṛṣṇa's club not only pulverized the Saubha vehicle but pulverized its occupants as well. If a pestle crushes an *uḍumbara* fruit, how can the insects within escape? ||12||

The vehicle was turned to powder, which could be used by the Apsarās for their eye ointment. The powder fell over the sea and lingered there like mist. ||13 - 14||

Sālva, having magical powers, had left the vehicle, but on seeing his vehicle pulverized, he could not give any instructions on how to prevent that. As soon as he opened his mouth, Kṛṣṇa's club could not tolerate any delay. ||15||

Foolish Sālva, seeing Kṛṣṇa's club, took up his own fearful club with determination. With his arrows, Kṛṣṇa cut off his arm which was holding the club. ||16||

[23] When he attempted fighting with his left arm, filled with false enthusiasm, Kṛṣṇa, whose form was like Sunrise Mountain in contact with the red sun, cut off the Sālva's head, which was like complete darkness. ||17||

When Saubha and Sālva fell in the ocean, the sound of the waves mixed with the sound of heaven's drums. ||18||

[24] Snigdhakaṇṭha concluded: "O Nanda! Your son for whom all the people of Gokula became inundated with sorrow on thinking of Kṛṣṇa's fight with Sālva, shines perfectly on your lap with his effulgence and delights the people of Gokula." ||19||

[25] The Vraja bards began praising Kṛṣṇa:

You enabled Yudhiṣṭhira to hold the sacrifice. You filled the directions with the attractive sound of your chariot wheels. You spread your influence around Dvārakā.

The sight of the maneuvers of Saubha craft incited your courage. You destroyed the enemy weapons with your arrows.

You covered Saubha with your arrows. You detected Sālva's false messenger. You bestow ignorance to the ignorant and bestow knowledge to the wise.

You destroyed all his weapons. You deflected his blows with your arrows. You destroyed Saubha with your arrows. You destroyed Sālva's pride.

You cut off his right arm with your arrows. You cut off his head with your *cakra*. You thus were victorious in the battle. O dearest of Vraja! You remain here! ||20||

[26] Completing the story and satisfying all, while playing instruments the bards went on their way.

[27] In the evening, in the assembly of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa, the reciter spoke. That was completed with one verse:

"O Rādhā! As Kṛṣṇa nourishes your eyes by his presence he nourishes your ears by his talks." ||21||

[28] When everyone returned to their houses with satisfied hearts, Rādhā met Kṛṣṇa in private.

Chapter Twenty-nine

Proofs of Future Events

[1] Proofs will now be given for the topics that will appear later in the work. Though everyone is situated in happiness in the spiritual world, here the people of Vraja were suffering. Paurṇamāsī and Vṛndā began to deliberate on the situation with disturbed minds in a solitary place.

[2] When Kṛṣṇa left Vraja and went to Mathurā, unable to bear seeing the grief of the people of Vraja, Vṛndā and Paurṇamāsī along with Madhumaṅgala stayed for a long time in a hut in a solitary forest in a place far away. There they spoke on many subjects. Now they spoke as follows.

[3] When the battle with Sālva broke out and Vraja was overcome with grief, on hearing all the news, Vṛndā spoke while crying, “O Paurṇamāsī! I think there is no hope.”

[4] Paurṇamāsī with choked voice said, “Because of lamentation I have forgotten to examine all issues. Thus I am not even aware of my body. I am not aware of what is in front of me, what to speak of what is at a distance.”

[5] Vṛndā said, “You are Yogamāyā. To hide that, you have taken the dress of a renounced person. How has knowledge been lost in you?”

[6] Paurṇamāsī said, “You are the *līlā-śakti*, and the same has happened to you.”

[7] Vṛndā said, “How did this happen?”

[8] Paurṇamāsī said, “That *śakti* of Kṛṣṇa called *prīti* which functions as *rati, prema, praṇaya*, *rāga, anurāga* and *mahābhāva* even bewilders Kṛṣṇa who is the supreme shelter of us all, because of its power:

> *tato vatsān adṛṣṭvaitya puline ’pi ca vatsapān |*
> *ubhāv api vane kṛṣṇo vicikāya samantataḥ ||*
>
> Thereafter, when Kṛṣṇa was unable to find the calves, he returned to the bank of the river, but there he was also unable to see the cowherd boys. Thus he began to search for both the calves and the boys, as if he could not understand what had happened. SB 10.13.16

[9] Vṛndā said, “But we do not see this *prīti* everywhere. I cannot understand the cause.”

[10] Paurṇamāsī said, “Because of nearness to devotees in *prema*, this *śakti* clearly manifests a taste for Kṛṣṇa.”

[11] Vṛndā said, “What does that mean in practical terms?”

[12] Paurṇamāsī said, “By association with the people of Vraja who have the highest *prema* we also have developed such *prema.* What to speak of others, Kṛṣṇa himself become bewildered. Immersed in the river of *prema* like the Gaṅgā and then coming out, we experience spiritual knowledge and spiritual bewilderment.”

[13] Vṛndā said, “How then should we maintain hope?”

[14] Paurṇamāsī said, “When I was lamenting in a dream like you, after that, at the end of night, some disguised man gave me a book. He said ‘Study this thoroughly.’ Saying nothing else he left. Please read it to me, since my eyes are filled with tears and afflicted with disease.”

[15] Vṛndā offering respects to the book said, “This book is filled with script the color of sapphire on golden pages, shining like jewels in the dense darkness. I think that Kṛṣṇa himself with yellow cloth has appeared since this book has his effulgence and is bound up with faultless pearls.” ||1||

[16] Paurṇamāsī said in bliss, “This most respectable book will bring us happiness. Please read it immediately.”

[17] Vṛndā began reading in bliss. First she looked at the letters written on the cover and described them. “You should contemplate part of the *Padma Purāṇa, Uttara-khaṇḍa,* which agrees with particular parts of the *Bhāgavatam* for your well-being. You should also consider other points which will support this.”

[18] When Paurṇamāsī said, “First read it.” Vṛndā began reading. There were verses from *Bhāgavatam:*

> *tasmin nipatite pāpe saubhe ca gadayā hate |*
> *nedur dundubhayo rājan vyomni deva-gaṇeritāḥ |*
> *sakhīnām apacitiṃ kurvan dantavakro ruṣābhyagāt ||*
>
> With the sinful Śālva now dead and his Saubha airship destroyed, the heavens resounded with kettledrums played by groups of demigods. Then Dantavakra, wanting to avenge the death of his friends, furiously attacked the Lord. SB 10.77.37
>
> *śrī-śuka uvāca—*
> *śiśupālasya śālvasya pauṇḍrakasyāpi durmatiḥ |*
> *para-loka-gatānāṃ ca kurvan pārokṣya-sauhṛdam ||*
> *ekaḥ padātiḥ saṅkruddho gadā-pāṇiḥ prakampayan |*
> *padbhyām imāṃ mahā-rāja mahā-sattvo vyadṛśyata ||*
> *taṃ tathāyāntam ālokya gadām ādāya satvaraḥ |*
> *avaplutya rathāt kṛṣṇaḥ sindhuṃ veleva pratyadhāt ||*

Acting out of friendship for Śiśupāla, Śālva and Pauṇḍraka, who had all passed on to the alone, on foot and wielding a club in his hand, the mighty warrior shook the earth with his footsteps. Seeing Dantavakra approach, Lord Kṛṣṇa quickly picked up his club, jumped down from his chariot and stopped his advancing opponent just as the shore holds back the ocean. SB 10.78.1-3

[19] tad-ante ca—

kṛṣṇo 'pi tam ahan gurvyā kaumodakyā stanāntare |
gadā-nirbhinna-hṛdaya udvaman rudhiraṃ mukhāt ||
prasārya keśa-bāhv-aṅghrīn dharaṇyāṃ nyapatad vyasuḥ|
tataḥ sūkṣmataraṃ jyotiḥ kṛṣṇam āviśad adbhutam |
paśyatāṃ sarva-bhūtānāṃ yathā caidya-vadhe nṛpa ||
vidūrathas tu tad-bhrātā bhrātṛ-śoka-pariplutaḥ |
āgacchad asi-carmābhyām ucchvasaṃs taj-jighāṃsayā ||
tasya cāpatataḥ kṛṣṇaś cakreṇa kṣura-neminā |
śiro jahāra rājendra sa-kirīṭaṃ sa-kuṇḍalam ||
evaṃ saubhaṃ ca śālvaṃ ca dantavakraṃ sahānujam |
hatvā durviṣahān anyair īḍitaḥ sura-mānavaiḥ ||
vṛtaś ca vṛṣṇi-pravarair viveśālaṅkṛtāṃ purīm ||

After that:

With his massive Kaumodakī club, the Lord struck Dantavakra in the middle of his chest. His heart shattered by the club's blow, Dantavakra vomited blood and fell lifeless to the ground, his hair disheveled and his arms and legs sprawling.

A most subtle and wondrous spark of light then rose from the demon's body and entered Lord Kṛṣṇa while everyone looked on, O King, just as when Śiśupāla was

killed. But then Dantavakra's brother Vidūratha, immersed in sorrow over his brother's death, came forward breathing heavily, sword and shield in hand. He wanted to kill the Lord. O best of kings, as Vidūratha fell upon him, Lord Kṛṣṇa used his razor-edged Sudarśana disc to remove his head, complete with its helmet and earrings. Having thus destroyed Śālva and his Saubha airship, along with Dantavakra and his younger brother, all of whom were invincible before any other opponent, the Lord was praised by demigods, human beings and great sages. As they sang his glories and showered him with flowers, the Supreme Lord entered his festively decorated capital city in the company of the most eminent Vṛṣṇis. SB 10.78.8-13,15

[20] Paurṇamāsī said, "Here one should understand that when Sālva is killed, Dantavakra in armor takes up his club and arriving in a crooked manner is killed by Kṛṣṇa's club."

[21] Her student Vṛndā had a doubt: "O Paurṇamāsī! This is beyond my intelligence. Since Dantavakra lived far away how could he immediately understand that Sālva had been killed? Let that be, but how did he arrive there from a distant place like a *devatā?* And he came walking with a club in his hand. How did that happen?"

[22] Paurṇamāsī said, "Good question. But enlighten your words by what is written later in the book."

[23] Vṛndā then read prose from *Padma Purāṇa:*

atha śiśupālaṃ nihataṃ śrutvā dantavaktraḥ kṛṣṇena yoddhuṃ mathurām ājagāma |
kṛṣṇas tu tac chrutvā ratham āruhya tena yoddhuṃ mathurām āyayau |

dantavaktra-vāsudevayor ahorātraṃ mathurā-pura-dvāri yamunā-tīre saṅgrāmaḥ samavartata kṛṣṇas tu gadayā taṃ jaghāna |
sa tu cūrṇita-sarvāṅgo vajra-nirbhinna-mahīdhara iva gatāsur avani-tale papāta |

Hearing that Śuśupāla was dead, Dantavakra came to Mathurā to fight Kṛṣṇa. Hearing this, Kṛṣṇa got on his chariot and went to Mathurā to fight him. The two fought day and night at the gate of Mathurā on the bank of the Yamunā. Kṛṣṇa killed him with his club. Dantavakra, like a mountain hit by a thunderbolt, with all his limbs smashed, gave up his life and fell to the ground.

[24] Having read this, Vṛndā asked, “I understand that the two Purāṇas contradict each other!”

[25] Filled with realization in her words, Paurṇamāsī answered:

No, no! *Bhāgavatam* cannot have such inaccurate statements. There should not be contrary statements since there should be agreement between Purāṇas. There can be no alternative but to have agreement of statements. Śālva did not attend the *rājasūya* sacrifice with Śiśupāla. He was an ocean of strength, famous for making the earth tremble when he walked. He could break a mountain with his teeth. It is said that he attained this great strength suddenly. From that one can suspect that he worshiped Śiva. There is no need to investigate why he trod the earth and acted so inimically, since he would be destroyed by a false blessing. One should understand that the chariot of Kṛṣṇa, which could go anywhere one desired, was very powerful. One can also expect the help of Nārada, expert at delivering

messages, who traveled at the speed of the mind and who was eager to see the destruction pastimes of Kṛṣṇa.

[26] *Bhāgavatam* says:

> *sakhīnām apacitiṃ kurvan dantavakro ruṣābhagāt |*
> *śiśupālasya śālvasya pauṇḍrakasyāpi durmatiḥ ||*
>
> Then Dantavakra, wanting to avenge the death of his friends, furiously attacked the Lord. Acting out of friendship for Śiśupāla, Śālva and Pauṇḍraka, who had all passed on to the next world, the wicked Dantavakra appeared on the battlefield in a great rage. SB 10.77.37, 10.78.1
>
> In this verse, Śālva is also included among Dantavakra's friends. *Padma Purāṇa* says, "Hearing this, Kṛṣṇa went to fight in Mathurā." *Bhāgavatam* simply says, "Dantavakra appeared as a mighty warrior (no mention of Mathurā)." Kṛṣṇa understood that Dantavakra knew of Śiśupāla's death from Nārada and had then come to Mathurā. It is said by some that after killing Śiśupāla, Kṛṣṇa did not leave Indraprastha for Dvārakā, but went to Mathurā and stayed there waiting to fight with Dantavakra on the road. But it is also said that first he returned to Dvārakā. This was the doubt of Dantavakra. After thinking of this considerably, he was informed by Nārada, who gives happiness through the pastimes of Kṛṣṇa, that Śālva had been killed. Kṛṣṇa learned from Nārada that Dantavakra was in Mathurā and that Nārada had met him. Kṛṣṇa then arrived in Mathurā at the speed of the mind on his chariot. In this way the two statements are harmonized. Whether he will come to Mathurā today or tomorrow, it will happen sometime. Please read the rest of the book.

[27] Vṛndā read further. Reading she also enacted the words. As with the previous section, it was in prose:

> *kṛṣṇo ʻpi taṃ hatvā yamunām uttīrya nanda-vrajaṃ gatvā prāktanau pitarāv abhivādya āśvāsya tābhyāṃ sāśrukaṇṭham āliṅgitaḥ sakala-gopa-vṛddhān praṇamyāśvāsya ratnābharaṇādibhis tatrasthān santarpayāmāsa*
>
> After killing him, Kṛṣṇa, crossing the Yamunā, went to Vraja and greeting his original parents, comforted them, and was embraced by them with tears in their throats. He offered respects to all the elder cowherds and satisfied everyone present with jewel ornaments.

[28] After reading this, Vṛndā again asked with tears flowing from her eyes, “Is this according to *Śrīmad-bhāgavatam*?”

[29] With a full heart, Paurṇamāsī said, “See the rest of the section.”

[30] Vṛndā again read *Bhāgavatam:*

> *tās tathā tapyatīr vīkṣya sva-prasthāne yadūttamaḥ |*
> *sāntvayām āsa sa-premair āyāsya iti dautyakaiḥ ||*
>
> As he departed, that best of the Yadus saw how the *gopīs,* were lamenting, and thus he consoled them by sending a messenger with this loving promise: “I will return.” SB 10.39.35

[31] Paurṇamāsī said, “This was his departure for Mathurā.”

[32] Vṛndā read:

> *yāta yūyaṃ vrajaṃ tāta vayaṃ ca sneha-duḥkhitān |*
> *jñātīn vo draṣṭum eṣyāmo vidhāya suhṛdāṃ sukham ||*

Now you should all return to Vraja, dear father. We shall come to see you, our dear relatives who suffer in separation from us, as soon as we have given some happiness to your well-wishing friends. SB 10.45.23

[33] Paurṇamāsī said, “After killing Kaṃsa, Kṛṣṇa said this to Nanda after some days.”

[34] She read further:

hatvā kaṃsaṃ raṅga-madhye pratīpaṃ sarva-sātvatām |
yad āha vaḥ samāgatya kṛṣṇaḥ satyaṃ karoti tat ||

āgamiṣyaty adīrgheṇa kālena vrajam acyutaḥ |
priyaṃ vidhāsyate pitror bhagavān sātvatāṃ patiḥ ||

Having killed Kaṃsa, the enemy of all the Yadus, in the wrestling arena, Kṛṣṇa will now surely fulfill his promise to you by coming back. SB 10.46.35

Infallible Kṛṣṇa, the Lord of the devotees, will soon return to Vraja to satisfy His parents. SB 10.46.34

[35 - 36] Paurṇamāsī said, “You should understand that to be Uddhava’s message. He says that Kṛṣṇa will see (*draṣṭum*) the people of Vraja. That is the final goal. “He will soon return to Vraja to satisfy his parents.” This is his goal also–to be cared for by his parents with love. Please continue.”

[37] Vṛndā read:

mayy āveśya manaḥ kṛtsnaṃ vimuktāśeṣa-vṛtti yat |
anusmarantyo māṃ nityam acirān mām upaiṣyatha ||

Because your minds are totally absorbed in me and free from all other engagement, you remember me always, and so you will very soon have me again in your presence. SB 10.47.36

[38] Paurṇamāsī said, “This is also Uddhava’s instruction. He uses the word ‘me’ three times to indicate that that the *gopīs* will attain him in the form of Kṛṣṇa. Please continue.”

[39] Vṛndā said, “This is from *Hari-vaṃśa:*

ahaṃ sa eva go-madhye gopaiḥ saha vanecaraḥ |
prītimān vicariṣyāmi kāmacārī yathā gajaḥ ||

Being very pleased, I wander as I please in the forests with the cowherds and cows, just like an elephant.”

[40] Paurṇamāsī said, “After killing Kaṃsa, Kṛṣṇa said this to Ugrasena. This statement proves what I said earlier–that he would return.”

[41] Seeing the statements, Vṛndā spoke as if dancing: “Since he always tells the truth, his words cannot be a lie. If I hear from *Bhāgavatam* that he will return, which will please the ears, then that will bring the highest pleasure.”

[42] Paurṇamāsī said with full enthusiasm, “Read the rest of the letter. It will produce bliss.”

[43] Vṛndā said in bliss, “There is something here from *Bhāgavatam:*

yarhy ambujākṣāpasasāra bho bhavān
kurūn madhūn vātha suhṛd-didṛkṣayā |
tatrābda-koṭi-pratimaḥ kṣaṇo bhaved
raviṃ vinākṣṇor iva nas tavācyuta ||

O lotus-eyed Lord, whenever you go away to Mathurā, Vṛndāvana or Hastināpura to meet your friends and relatives, every moment of your absence seems like a million years. O infallible one, at that time our eyes become useless, as if bereft of sun.” SB 1.11.9

[44] Paurṇamāsī said, “This is a statement of the people of Dvārakā when Kṛṣṇa enters the city after the battle of Kurukṣetra.”

[45] Vṛndā spoke. “Please explain this verse.”

[46] Paurṇamāsī said, “The word *kurūn* means of the place of the Kurus and *madhūn* means of Mathurā. The word *suhṛdaḥ* refers to the people of Vraja, whom he meets after leaving Dvārakā. This use of the word *suhṛd* is seen in the following passage.

> *balabhadraḥ kuru-śreṣṭha bhagavān ratham āsthitaḥ |*
> *suhṛd-didṛkṣur utkaṇṭhaḥ prayayau nanda-gokulam ||*
>
> O best of the Kurus, once Lord Balarāma, eager to visit his well-wishing friends, mounted his chariot and traveled to Nanda Gokula.” SB 10.65.1

[47] Vṛndā said, “That could happen at another time, not after the killing of Dantavakra.”

[48] Paurṇamāsī reflected and then said, “Please continue reading.”

[49] Vṛndā again spoke, “Ah, ah! Another *Bhāgavatam* verse is quoted:

> *api smaratha naḥ sakhyaḥ svānām artha-cikīrṣayā |*
> *gatāṃś cirāyitāñ chatru-pakṣa-kṣapaṇa-cetasaḥ ||*
>
> My dear girlfriends, do you still remember me? It was for my relatives’ sake that I stayed away so long, intent on destroying my enemies.” SB 10.82.41

[50] Having spoken, Vṛndā then said, “What do we understand from this?”

[51 - 52] Paurṇamāsī said: “In order to save the *gopīs*, the objects of his affection, whose bodies were thin from suffering due to separation in Vraja, he promised that he

would return after killing all the enemies. After killing Vidūratha and Dantavakra, that was finished. After that, he threw away his weapons. This is according to *Padma Purāṇa,* the abode of all happiness, and *Śrīmad-bhāgavatam.* Someone may consider that Dantavakra was killed here or there, but in any case, one should understand that after killing him, Kṛṣṇa returns to Vraja.

Saying this Paurṇamāsī asked, “Is there anything else?”

[53] Vṛndā said (reading the verses from *Hari-vaṃśa* describing when Balarāma returned from Vraja and gave the news):

Balarāma, still wearing a traveler’s dress, beautiful with a new garland on his chest, embraced Kṛṣṇa. Seeing Balarāma coming quickly, Kṛṣṇa rose and offered him an excellent seat.

Seeing him, Kṛṣṇa asked him about the welfare of all his friends and the cows. Balarāma answered his brother who spoke sweetly: “O Kṛṣṇa! All those for whose good health you desire, are fine.”

[54] Paurṇamāsī explained the meaning: “In a private place, Kṛṣṇa asked Balarāma about the welfare of each living entity of Vraja. ‘O Kṛṣṇa! All those for whose good health you desire are fine.’ Having obtained that answer from Balarāma, he and Balarāma would attain auspiciousness when he would also meet the people of Vraja in the future. If he were indifferent to meeting them, there would be no auspiciousness.”

[55] Though increasing her intelligence by these words, Vṛndā had another doubt: “Why does the *Bhāgavatam* not mention his return to Vraja clearly like the *Padma Purāṇa*?”

[56] Paurṇamāsī said, “The wise say that *Bhāgavatam* is the head ornament of Kṛṣṇa’s devotees. It prefers not to reveal its secrets clearly in order to hide its ideas from persons who are full of desires for Kṛṣṇa’s wealth and indifferent to him because of their independent mentality and pride; and in order to increase longing in the devotees who worship Kṛṣṇa, thinking themselves to be residents of Gokula with *prema,* but who are devoid of hearing clearly what they most desire.”

[57] Vṛndā said, “It is proper to cover the intelligence of the materialists. But why create longing in the devotees?”

[58] Paurṇamāsī said, “When *prema* unites with longing, *prema* becomes *kāma* in association with Kṛṣṇa. Otherwise it does not happen.” ||2||

[59] Merged in bliss for a long time, Vṛndā then spoke with a smile, “How many years after his birth did Kṛṣṇa return to Vraja?”

[60] Paurṇamāsī said meditatively: “According to *Mahābhārata,* after the Kurukṣetra war, Yudhiṣṭhira became king at the age of sixty years. Arjuna and Kṛṣṇa were the same age, three years younger than Yudhiṣṭhira. Thus after the war, Kṛṣṇa was 57 years old. Before the war, Yudhiṣṭhira spent eleven years in the forest and two years incognito. Before this, Kṛṣṇa killed Dantavakra and Śālva. Thus Kṛṣṇa was 44 years old when he came to Vraja. After killing Dantavakra another form of Kṛṣṇa resided in Dvārakā for protecting the earth. *Bhāgavatam* has more authority than *Mahābhārata.* Where the statements do not agree, they can be explained in term of histories from different

kalpas. In this case *Mahābhārata's* statements are not essential. Let that be. Let us return to the topic."

[61] Vṛndā said, "After the previous passage from *Padma Purāṇa,* two verses continue the description:

> *kālindyāḥ puline ramye puṇya-vṛkṣa-samāvṛte |*
> *gopa-nārībhir aniśaṃ krīḍayāmāsa keśavaḥ ||*
> *ramya-keli-sukhenaiva gopa-veṣa-dharo hariḥ |*
> *baddha-prema-rasenātra māsa-dvayam uvāsa ha ||*
>
> Kṛṣṇa constantly played with the *gopīs* on the bank of the Yamunā covered with pure trees. Dressed as a cowherd, with happiness in his attractive pastimes, he spent two months absorbed in the *rasa* of *prema*." *Padma Purāṇa* 6.252.19-27

[62] Vṛndā asked the purport.

[63] Paurṇamāsī said, "The word *gopa-nārībhiḥ* means the cowherd women. In *Bhāgavatam Third Canto* thes Lord speaks to Kardama concerning Devahūtī and uses the words *nṛpa-vadhuḥ* in a similar way:

This princess to whom you have been attached for ten-thousand years in your heart will quickly fulfill your desires.

Similarly the words *gopa-kanyāḥ* is found in the *Mṛtyuñjaya-saṃhitā*:

> *smared vṛndāvane ramye mohayantam anāratam |*
> *govindaṃ puṇḍarīkākṣaṃ gopa-kanyāḥ sahasraśaḥ |*
> *muktāhāra-lasat-pīna-tuṅga-stana-bharānanāḥ ||*
>
> One should remember in Vṛndāvana, Govinda, contently enchanting, with lotus eyes and the thousands of the young cowherd women with raised breasts shining with pearl necklaces.

In Gautamīya-tantra it is said:

> *gopa-kanyā-sahasrais tu padma-patrāyatekṣaṇaiḥ |*
> *arcitaṃ bhāva-kusumais trailokyaika-guruṃ param ||*
>
> The *guru* of the three worlds is worshiped by thousands of cowherd girls *(gopa-kanyā*) with lotus eyes, using flowers of love.

The word constantly (*aniśam*) means for a night of Brahmā, as stated in *Bhāgavatam* concerning the *rāsa* dance. This could happen because Yogamāyā created forms to give a semblance of marriage to apparent husbands while the *gopīs* enjoyed with Kṛṣṇa. Thus the husbands did not hate Kṛṣṇa. The g*opīs* became freed from restrictions after the illusion of their marriage to other men was removed. This should be understood. It is said that all good qualities follow the quality of shame. In *Hari-vaṃśa,* Nārada praised Kṛṣṇa for this in the assembly of the Yadus:

> *yatra hrīḥ śrīḥ sthitā tatra yatra śrīs tatra sannatiḥ |*
> *sannatir hrīs tathā śrīś ca nityaṃ kṛṣṇe mahātmani ||*
>
> Lakṣmī resides where shyness resides. Where Lakṣmī resides, gentle conduct resides. These three are eternally in Kṛṣṇa. *Hari-vaṃśa* 2.101.73

[64] The phrases *ramya-keli-sukhenaiva* and *bahu-prema-rasena* indicate that the happiness of the pastimes with the *gopīs* is the fulfillment of all desires and the essence of all *rasas.* That was already achieved by bewildering the husbands. By great separation, this love was exposed, and the secret was revealed. The pastimes of the Lord which will necessarily occur in every *kalpa* were performed to reveal the strength of the *gopīs'* love and to satisfy the devotees. Though hiding the

knowledge that they were Kṛṣṇa's eternal consorts, like Sītā was for Rāma, those pastimes could not conceal their *prema.*

[65] That *prema* protected their vow for Kṛṣṇa as their husband even though they were in a condition of falling into another man's hands (apparently) like Sītā, by being subject to Kṛṣṇa's pastimes. But that *prema* later will destroy the suffering condition of being in another man's hands and will make Kṛṣṇa their husbands. Do not consider anything else. There is a famous statement: "Accordingly as they surrender to me, I respond to them." This applies to the *gopīs* so that their relationship with apparent husbands will dissolve and they will unite with Kṛṣṇa. Kṛṣṇa says that according to the devotees' desire for a particular form, he reveals that form. The form that the *gopīs* desire is this: "When will I have good fortune such that the idea of having another husband will without effort become false, like a bad dream, and in a waking state I will be Kṛṣṇa's wife?"

[66] What to speak of married *gopīs* having attraction for Kṛṣṇa; even the unmarried *gopīs* want Kṛṣṇa as their husband. This is the desire of all *gopīs:*

> *gopyaḥ kim ācarad ayaṃ kuśalaṃ sma veṇur*
> *dāmodarādhara-sudhām api gopikānām*
> *bhuṅkte svayaṃ yad avaśiṣṭa-rasaṃ hradinyo*
> *hṛṣyat-tvaco 'śru mumucus taravo yathāryaḥ*
>
> My dear *gopīs*, what auspicious activities must the flute have performed to enjoy the nectar of Kṛṣṇa's lips independently and leave only a taste for us *gopīs*, for whom that nectar is actually meant! SB 10.21.9
>
> *api bata madhu-puryām ārya-putro 'dhunāste*
> *smarati sa pitṛ-gehān saumya bandhūṃś ca gopān |*

kvacid api sa kathāṃ naḥ kiṅkarīṇāṃ gṛṇīte
bhujam aguru-sugandhaṃ mūrdhny adhāsyat kadā nu //

O Uddhava! It is indeed regrettable that Kṛṣṇa resides in Mathurā. Does he remember his father's household affairs and his friends, the cowherd boys? O great soul! Does he ever talk about us, his maidservants? When will he lay on our heads his aguru-scented hand? SB 10.47.21

The word *ārya-putra* (respected son) is used in the above verse (in a drama it indicates a wife speaking about her husband). This indicates secretly that they are his wives: "Though he takes us as his servants (*kiṅkarīṇāṃ*), when will he accept us as his wives publicly?" The word *ārya-putraḥ* hints that he is their husband, and *kiṅkarīṇām* hints that he should accept them publicly as his wives.

[67] He will personally come to Vraja. Coming, he will publicly marry them and create auspiciousness. This he himself indicates:

dhārayanty ati-kṛcchreṇa prāyaḥ prāṇān kathañcana |
pratyāgamana-sandeśair ballavyo me mad-ātmikāḥ //

Simply because I have promised to return to them, my fully devoted cowherd girlfriends struggle to maintain their lives somehow or other. SB 10.46.6

He promises to return to them, since they are his wives, who take him as their very life and are suffering because of separation. Though that is so, they cannot tolerate the situation because of the concept of marriage to another man, just as they cannot tolerate suffering from separation. In fact that suffering is greater than the

suffering caused by separation. He will certainly destroy that condition of suffering.

[68] Vṛndā said, “What you said will keep them alive.”

[69] Paurṇamāsī said, “The conception that the *gopīs,* who drank the nectar of Kṛṣṇa’s lips and defeated Lakṣmī, are married to someone else was created by *māyā.* Let people with materialistic minds think the relationship of Kṛṣṇa and the *gopīs* to be illicit. Ha! How unfortunate! Why would the devotees desire and hear about such connections with conviction?” ||3||

[70] Vṛndā asked, “If Kṛṣṇa stays two months in Vraja how can he enter Dvārakā with the Yadus who were on the battlefield when it is said in the *Bhāgavatam* as follows:

Having thus destroyed Śālva and his Saubha airship, along with Dantavakra and his younger brother, all of whom were invincible before any other opponent, the Lord entered his festively decorated capital city in the company of the most eminent Vṛṣṇis” SB 10.78.13-15

[71] Paurṇamāsī said with a laugh, “I do not know. This is all the action of Yogamāyā. In the bewildering of Brahmā, it is said:

> *ekasminn api yāte ’bde prāṇeśaṃ cāntarātmanaḥ |*
> *kṛṣṇa-māyā-hatā rājan kṣaṇārdhaṃ menire ’rbhakāḥ ||*
>
> O King, although the boys had passed an entire year apart from the Lord of their very lives, they had been covered by Lord Kṛṣṇa’s illusory potency and thus considered that year merely half a moment.” SB 10.14.43

[72] Vṛndā said, “Did the people of Dvārakā not know that Kṛṣṇa spent many days in Vraja performing pastimes?”

[73] Paurṇamāsī said, “Though they did not know at first, they heard from Dāruka, his charioteer. Because of this, the residents said:

> O lotus-eyed Lord, whenever you go away to Mathurā, Vṛndāvana or Hastināpura to meet your friends and relatives, every moment of your absence seems like a million years. O infallible one, at that time our eyes become useless, as if bereft of sun.” SB 1.11.9

[74] Vṛndā with bliss eagerly desired to relieve herself of a doubt: “From the two statements–he sometimes goes to Vraja, and he spent two months in Vraja–he must have left Vraja and gone to Dvārakā.”

[75] Paurṇamāsī said: “Read the rest of the book. The words of *Padma Purāṇa* will explain.”

[76] Vṛndā read as follows:

> *atha tatrasthā nandādayaḥ sarve janāḥ putra-dāra-sahitāḥ paśu-pakṣi-mṛgādayaś ca vāsudeva-prasādena divya-rūpa-dharā vimānam ārūḍhā parama-vaikuṇṭha-lokam avāpur iti |*
> *kṛṣṇas tu nanda-gopa-vrajaukasāṃ sarveṣāṃ paramaṃ nirāmayaṃ sva-padaṃ dattvā divi deva-gaṇaiḥ saṃstūyamāno dvāravatīṃ viveśa*
>
> Then Nanda and the others, along with their sons and wives, the cows, animals and birds, having spiritual forms by the mercy of Kṛṣṇa, entered an airplane and went to the supreme Vaikuṇṭha. Awarding the people of Vraja his own supreme spiritual abode, superior to

all others, he then entered Dvārakā, while being praised by the *devatās. Padma Purāṇa* 6.252.28-29

[77] Reading this, Vṛndā then said, "*Brahma-saṃhitā* also speaks of the place called Mahā-goloka superior to all other places:

goloka-nāmni nija-dhāmni tale ca tasya
devi maheśa-hari-dhāmasu teṣu teṣu |
te te prabhāva-nicayā vihitāś ca yena
govindam ādi-puruṣaṃ tam ahaṃ bhajāmi ||

I worship the Supreme Lord Govinda by whom respective powers are given to the abodes of Durgā, Śiva and Viṣṇu, which are situated below his own planet of Goloka. *Brahma-saṃhitā* 5.43

Also in the Nārāyaṇiya of Mokṣa-dharma (Mahābhārata) it is said:

evaṃ bahu-vidhai rūpaiś carāmīha vasundharām |
brahma-lokaṃ ca kaunteya golokaṃ ca sanātanam ||

O Kaunteya! I wander in many forms on earth, on Brahmaloka and in eternal Goloka." *Mahā-bhārata* 12.330.68

[78] Having described this, Vṛndā said in surprise, "Ah! This is also written in *Hari-vaṃśa* when Indra speaks after to coming to bathe Govinda. It is also described as all-pervading:

tasyopari gavāṃ lokaḥ sādhyās taṃ pālayanti hi |
sa hi sarva-gataḥ kṛṣṇa mahākāśa-gato mahān ||
upary upari tatrāpi gatis tava tapomayī |
yāṃ na vidmo vayaṃ sarve pṛcchanto 'pi pitāmaham ||

Above this is the planet of cows, protected by the perfected devotees. O Kṛṣṇa, it is all pervading, great,

above the Brahman. Above that is your abode full of great powers (Gokula), which I cannot understand, though I have asked Brahmā. *Hari-vaṃsa* 2.19.31-32

Please explain this to me.”

[79] Paurṇamāsī said, “The word *sādhyāḥ* means those who get mercy among all of us (not the *devatās* called Sādhyas). *Sarva-gataḥ* means that the place exists by means of Kṛṣṇa’s inconceivable energy just like his form. It is the highest because it makes its appearance to its worshipers. *Mahākāśa* refers to Brahman for *Vedānta-sutras* say *ākāśas tal-liṅgāt*: *ākāśa* refers to Brahman because of its similar characteristic (giving rise to other things). The place of the cows is above Brahman and should be realized. *Tapomayī* means full of all powers. *Yām na vidmhaḥ* means “Brahmā does not know it since it is hard to realize.”

[80] Vṛndā then read from *Bhāgavatam*:

nandas tv atīndriyaṃ dṛṣṭvā loka-pāla-mahodayam |
kṛṣṇe ca sannatiṃ teṣāṃ jñātibhyo vismito ’bravīt ||
te cautsukya-dhiyo rājan matvā gopās tam īśvaram |
api naḥ svagatiṃ sūkṣmām upādhāsyad adhīśvaram ||
iti svānāṃ sa bhagavān vijñāyākhila-dṛk svayam |
saṅkalpa-siddhaye teṣāṃ kṛpayaitad acintayat ||
jano vai loka etasminn avidyā-kāma-karmabhiḥ |
uccāvacāsu gatiṣu na veda svāṃ gatiṃ bhraman ||
iti sañcintya bhagavān mahā-kāruṇiko hariḥ |
darśayāmāsa lokaṃ svaṃ gopānāṃ tamasaḥ param ||
satyaṃ jñānam anantaṃ yad brahma-jyotiḥ sanātanam |
yad dhi paśyanti munayo guṇāpāye samāhitāḥ ||
te tu brahma-hradaṃ nītā magnāḥ kṛṣṇena coddhṛtāḥ |

dadṛśur brahmaṇo lokaṃ yatrākrūro ’dhyagāt purā ||
nandādayas tu taṃ dṛṣṭvā paramānanda-nirvṛtāḥ |
kṛṣṇaṃ ca tatra cchandobhiḥ stūyamānaṃ suvismitāḥ ||

Nanda Mahārāja had been astonished to see for the first time the great opulence of Varuṇa, the ruler of the ocean planet, and also to see how Varuṇa and his servants had offered such humble respect to Kṛṣṇa. Nanda described all this to his fellow cowherd men.

The cowherd men considered that Kṛṣṇa must be the Supreme Lord, and their minds, O King, were filled with eagerness. They thought, “Will the Supreme Lord bestow upon us his transcendental abode?”

Because he sees everything, Lord Kṛṣṇa, the Supreme Personality of Godhead, automatically understood what the cowherd men were conjecturing. Wanting to show his compassion to them by fulfilling their desires, the Lord thought as follows.

“Certainly people in this world are wandering among higher and lower destinations, which they achieve through activities performed according to their desires and without full knowledge. Thus people do not know their real destination.”

Thus deeply considering the situation, the all-merciful Supreme Personality of Godhead Hari revealed to the cowherd men his abode, which is beyond material darkness.

Lord Kṛṣṇa revealed the indestructible spiritual effulgence, which is unlimited, conscious and eternal. Sages see that spiritual existence in trance, when their consciousness is free of the modes of material nature.

> The cowherd men were brought by Lord Kṛṣṇa to the Brahma-hrada, made to submerge in the water, and then lifted up. From the same vantage point that Akrūra saw the spiritual world, the cowherd men saw the realm of the Absolute Truth.
>
> Nanda Mahārāja and the other cowherd men felt the greatest happiness when they saw that transcendental abode. They were especially amazed to see Kṛṣṇa himself there, surrounded by the personified Vedas, who were offering him prayers. SB 10.28.10-17

[81] Vṛndā said, “What happiness do we get from these verses?”

[82] Paurṇamāsī said, “They saw Kṛṣṇa’s abode called Goloka as their abode and he gave that to them later. He brought them to the holy spot glorified by Akrūra. In order to make that place famous, he submerged them in its water. He brought them to Vṛndāvana, and they saw the planet of the Lord with a human form. They did not see the spiritual world in the water as Akrūra did. One should not understand otherwise. The word *purā* means old, close, related, beyond and soon in the future. The word *loka* refers to a spiritual realm, beyond *tamas. Satyaṃ jñānam* and other such words refer to the Lord’s *svarūpa,* involving his *cit-cakti*, since he cannot be touched by the material *guṇas.*

[83] The phrases *naḥ sva-gatim, na veda svāṃ gatim, gopānāṃ tamasaḥ param*, and *kṛṣṇaṃ ca tatra* seem to indicate that the Vraja of the material world is not the spiritual world. But *Brahma-saṃhitā* indicates that Nanda’s place is the same as the spiritual Goloka. In Goloka, Kṛṣṇa was praised by the Vedas. The best of women, the Vedas, describing Kṛṣṇa’s pastimes from

birth, are the witnesses. When he appeared before the cowherds of Vraja, they saw him as their son only. Other followers are not mentioned. Thus the verse indicates that in Goloka the cowherds serve Kṛṣṇa. Nanda and the others, with taste only for Kṛṣṇa, became most blissful and astonished.

[84] When Kṛṣṇa appears on earth, the cowherds cannot see that planet. Thus they seem to be ignorant *(jano vai*). The word *jana* refers to the devotee as in the verse:

> *sālokya-sārṣṭi-sāmīpya- sārūpyaikatvam apy uta*
> *dīyamānaṃ na gṛhṇanti vinā mat-sevanaṃ janāḥ*
>
> Devotees (*janāḥ)* do not accept any kind of liberation—*sālokya, sārṣṭi, sāmīpya, sārūpya* or *ekatva*—even though they are offered by the Supreme Personality of Godhead. SB 3.29.13
>
> *tasmān mac-charaṇaṃ goṣṭhaṃ man-nāthaṃ mat-parigraham |*
> *gopāye svātma-yogena so ʻyaṃ me vrata āhitaḥ ||*
>
> I must therefore protect the cowherd community by my transcendental potency, for I am their shelter, I am their master, and indeed they are my own family. After all, I have taken a vow to protect my devotees. SB 10.25.18

[85] In his mind Kṛṣṇa spoke this way because of his strong faith in his people. This clearly shows that the people of Vraja were his most intimate friends. If the word *jana* referred to ordinary people, then his mercy (showing Goloka) would have been spread to all people. This would also not agree with the words *svām gatim* (their abode). Thus my own people, the greatest devotees, are bewildered in this material world by my

power of ignorance, and wander about in different forms. They think that they are ultimately impersonal in form, and do not know their abode known as Goloka. That is described as follows:

iti nandādayo gopāḥ kṛṣṇa-rāma-kathāṃ mudā |
kurvanto ramamāṇāś ca nāvindan bhava-vedanām ||

In this way all the cowherd men, headed by Nanda Mahārāja, enjoyed topics about the pastimes of Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma with great transcendental pleasure, and they could not even perceive material tribulations. SB 10.11.58

This means "My *līlā śakti* which makes them think they are material produces this effect." Because of that, ignorance Nanda was astonished at seeing Varuṇa's abode. This is how to understand the statement that he showed them his abode and later gave it to them.

[86] Vṛndā said, "Ah! How will they all disappear from my forest? Will they again become separated from Kṛṣṇa?"

[87] Paurṇamāsī said, "If something else remains in the book please read it."

[88] Vṛndā read: "This is a little something from the *Varāha Purāṇa:*

tatrāpi mahad āścaryaṃ paśyanti paṇḍitā narāḥ |
kālīya-hrada-pūrveṇa kadambo mahito drumaḥ |
śata-śākhaṃ viśālākṣi puṇyaṃ surabhi-gandhi ca |
sa ca dvādaśa-māsāni manojñaḥ śubha-śītalaḥ |
puṣpāyati viśālākṣi prabhāsanto diśo daśa ||

tatrāścaryaṃ pravakṣyāmi tac chṛṇu tvaṃ vasundhare |
labhante manujāḥ siddhiṃ mama karma-parāyaṇāḥ ||

tasya tatrottare pārśve 'śoka-vṛkṣaḥ sita-prabhaḥ |
vaiśākhasya tu māsasya śukla-pakṣasya dvādaśī ||
sa puṣpati ca madhyāṅge mama bhakta-sukhāvahaḥ |
na kaścid api jānāti vinā bhāgavataṃ śucim ||

The wise see something astonishing in Vṛndāvana. There is a huge, attractive *kadamba* tree near Kāliya Lake, with a hundred branches and pure fragrance. It flowers in all twelve months and gives great coolness and illuminates the ten directions. …I will explain something astonishing there. Please listen, O earth! Those men who work for me attain perfection. North of Brahma-kuṇda is an *aśoka* tree with white radiance. It flowers on the twelfth lunar day of the waxing phase of Vaiśākha month and gives happiness to my devotee. No one knows this except the pure devotees."

[89] Paurṇamāsī then said, "*Tasya* means *brahma-kuṇḍa*. What else is there?"

[90 - 91] Vṛndā said, "From the *Mathurā-māhātmya* of the *Skānda Purāṇa* there is this:

tato vṛndāvanaṃ puṇyaṃ vṛndā-devī-samāśritam |
hariṇādhiṣṭhitaṃ tac ca brahma-rudrādi-sevitam ||

vatsair vatsatarībhiś ca sadā krīḍati mādhavaḥ |
vṛndāvanāntara-gataḥ sa-rāmo bālakair vṛtaḥ ||

Vṛndāvana is most pure. It is protected by Vṛndā-devī. It is the residence of Kṛṣṇa. Brahmā, Śiva and many *devatās* worship it. Kṛṣṇa eternally plays with the calves and cows along with Balarāma and his friends within Vṛndāvana.

From the *Ādi-varāha Purāṇa* this is quoted:

kṛṣṇa-krīḍā-setu-bandhaṃ mahā-pātaka-nāśanam |
valabhīṃ tatra krīḍārthaṃ kṛtvā devo gadādharaḥ ||

gopakaiḥ sahitas tatra kṣaṇam ekaṃ dine dine |
tatraive ramaṇārthaṃ hi nitya-kālaṃ sa gacchati ||

The bridge built for Kṛṣṇa's pastimes destroys the greatest of sins. Having constructed a lookout pavilion there for playing, the Lord, holder of the club, goes there in a moment's time every day, enjoying with his cowherd friends, eternally. The wise man should live in Vṛndāvana until he sees Kṛṣṇa."

[92] Vṛndā asked, "How can he eternally play in Vṛndāvana when he is now absent for so long?"

[93] Paurṇamāsī said, "As the lord in Vaikuṇṭha sometimes comes to this earth to give mercy to Gajendra and Dhruva, but also eternally resides in Vaikuṇṭha, so Kṛṣṇa also comes to earth, but remains eternally in Vṛndāvana. For he who plays in time without beginning and end, this time is a second. If there is anything remaining in the book please read it."

[94] Vṛndā said, "After this, *Bṛhad-gautamīya-tantra* is quoted."

[95] Paurṇamāsī said, "Pÿease read it."

[96] Vṛndā read:

kim idaṃ dvādaśābhikhyaṃ vṛndāraṇyaṃ viśāmpate |
śrotum icchāmi bhagavan yadi yogo 'smi me vada ||
śrī-kṛṣṇa uvāca—
idaṃ vṛndāvanaṃ ramyaṃ mama dhāmaiva kevalam |
atra me paśavaḥ pakṣi-vṛkṣā kīṭā narāmarāḥ |
ye vasanti mamādhiṣṇye mṛtā yānti mamālayam ||
atra yā gopa-kanyāś ca nivasanti mamālaye |
kālindīyaṃ suṣumnākhyā paramāmṛta-vāhinī ||
atra devāś ca bhūtāni vartante sūkṣma-rūpataḥ |
sarva-deva-mayaś cāhaṃ na tyajāmi vanaṃ kvacit ||

āvirbhāvas tirobhāvo bhaven me 'tra yuge yuge |
tejo-mayam idaṃ ramyam adṛśyaṃ carma-cakṣuṣā ||

O master of the people I desire to hear about the twelve forests of Vṛndāvana. If I am qualified please tell me. Kṛṣṇa then spoke. This pleasant Vṛndāvana is my only abode. There, all cows, animals, birds, insects and humans are without death. Those who live under my mercy come to my abode on dying. The daughters of the cowherd men live in my abode. Completely giving up all connections, they serve me continually. This place, measuring five *yojanas*, is non-different from my body. The Yamunā, flowing with the sweetest nectar, is the *suṣumnā* (central nerve) of that body. All the *devas* and the elements exist there with spiritual forms. I, the embodiment of all *devas,* do not leave that forest for a moment, though I appear and disappear in this world age after age. But this radiant forest full of pleasure is invisible to the material eye."

[97] Paurṇamāsī said, "This shows the *prakaṭa* and *aprakaṭa* pastimes. These are the two types. It speaks of 'My cows' and the abode which is radiant or '*tejoma*ya.'"

[98] In a happy mood Vṛndā then asked, "Please explain this concept completely."

[99] Paurṇamāsī said, "This is what is meant by those words. His power known as Goloka is present in this Vṛndāvana at all times. But you, like the people of Vraja, are not aware of it now. Just as he enlightened the earth about Vṛndāvana by his words in *Varāha Purāṇa*, so Kṛṣṇa showed the people of Vraja his eternal abode. It is described that they live there eternally. It is useless for them to go far away from there according to the logic of

“If you have honey in your cupboard, why go to the forest.”

[100 - 101] Vṛndā said, “True, true. The two are non-different. Indra says that in *Hari-vaṃśa:*

> *sa tu lokas tvayā kṛṣṇa sīdamānaḥ kṛtātmanā |*
> *dhṛto dhṛtimatā vīra nighantopdadravān gavām ||*
>
> O Kṛṣṇa! When I inundated this realm you held up Govardhana, destroyed the cows’ suffering and nourished the people. *Hari-vaṃśa* 2.19.35

But please explain the *Padma Purāṇa* words, ‘Nanda and others mounted the airplane and went to the highest Vaikuṇṭha.’”

[102 - 103] Paurṇamāsī said, “Nanda and other cowherds along with their sons and wives such as Yaśodā, along with Kṛṣṇa, took on most inconceivable forms by his mercy when he returned to Vraja from Vasudeva in Dvārakā, and while looking at each other in bliss, mounted the vehicle which would travel according to Kṛṣṇa’s desire, not knowing why they had mounted the vehicle but knowing finally that they were in Goloka, and were covered by the effulgence of the chariot. They attained the Vaikuṇṭha known as Goloka filled with the greatest splendor, a manifestation of what they previously saw (after being submerged in Brahma-hrada), which makes all material things insignificant. Then they attained Gokula, by crossing the Yamunā’s north bank and coming to the southern bank. This place was filled with peace *(nirāmayam*), without the malady of separation again. It was his place (*sva-padam*), his eternal place. He went to Goloka with sons and wives of the cowherds. But he remained in Vraja in the form where the people saw him as their son. And he entered

Dvārakā in the majestic form seen by the Yadus. Thus all things are adjusted appropriately. It is explained that he mounted an airplane to astonish the common people (They thought, “Where did the people of Vraja go?”) and to hide the real facts. Let them live on the northern or southern bank of the Yamunā. The cowherds in any case even without mounting the airplane attained Goloka just as they did by being submerged in Brahma-hrada.

If Kṛṣṇa did not leave Dvārakā, return to Vraja and stay there, all *rasa* would be destroyed completely. Everything would be a useless—the bliss at his birth, his beauty at every moment when he grew, the profuse affection, the blissful pastimes, the appeasement caused by his separation.” ||4||

[104] Vṛndā asked, “If Kṛṣṇa later saved the lives of the people of Vraja by coming, why did he not do that earlier, by coming from Mathurā?”

[105] Paurṇamāsī said:

This has been established as the regular pastimes, occurring repeatedly in every *kalpa* for nourishing *rasa.* You ask about a shorter period of separation because of your anxiety. I am aware of that. But Śukadeva and others do not make changes in the pastimes unnecessarily since the pastimes progress in a specific order according to the progression of ardent longing.

He leaves in order to nourish happiness, which occurs when he returns. If this did not happen, *rasa* would not be nourished in Vraja. ||5||

[106] Therefore separation is necessary for nourishing *rasa* in Vraja. He himself has said, “The reason I do not immediately reciprocate the affection of living beings

even when they worship me, O *gopīs*, is that I want to intensify their loving devotion.” SB 10.32.20

[107] Saying this Paurṇamāsī asked, “Is there anything else?”

[108] Vṛndā said in bliss, “O mistress! There is something else from the *Bhāgavatam.*”

[109] Paurṇamāsī said, “Please read it.”

[110] Vṛndā said:

> *jayati jananivāso devakī-janma-vādo*
> *yadu-vara-pariṣat svair dorbhir asyann adharmam |*
> *sthira-cara-vṛjina-ghnaḥ susmita-śrī-mukhena*
> *vraja-pura-vanitānāṃ vardhayan kāma-devam ||*
>
> Lord Śrī Kṛṣṇa is the ultimate resort of all living entities, and who is also known as Devakīnandana or Yaśodā-nandana, the son of Devakī and Yaśodā. He is the guide of the Yadu dynasty, and with his mighty arms he kills everything inauspicious, as well as every man who is impious. By his presence he destroys all things inauspicious for all living entities, moving and inert. His blissful smiling face always increases the desires of the gopīs of Vṛndāvana. May he be all glorious and happy!” SB 10.90.48

[111] Paurṇamāsī said, “This clearly describes what I said. The conclusion of Śukadeva in the *Bhāgavatam* is that separation is destroyed and eternal pleasure is provided.”

[112 - 113] She continued, “He took birth from Devakī in order to torment the sinful demons by the Yadus who were his arms. Accepting this task, he exists at all times with excellence, increasing the love of women in Vraja and Dvārakā by his smile. The cause is explained. He is

the destroyer of the suffering of separation for all moving and immobile beings and he appears in the heart of his worshiper. Because of what has been said here, the disappearance pastime with the iron ball should be understood to be illusory. Like the story that Kṛṣṇa is an *avatāra* of Kṣīrodakaśāyī Viṣṇu, the disappearance pastimes are useful for hiding his eternal pastimes."

[114] Vṛndā read two verses from *Bhāgavatam*:

> *dvārakāṃ hariṇā tyaktāṃ samudro 'plāvayat kṣaṇāt |*
> *varjayitvā mahārāja śrīmad-bhagavad-ālayam ||*
> *smṛtyāśeṣāśubha-haraṃ sarva-maṅgala-maṅgalam |*
> *nityaṃ sannihitas tatra bhagavān madhusūdanaḥ ||*
>
> As soon as Dvārakā was abandoned by the Supreme Lord, the ocean flooded it on all sides, O King, sparing only his palace. Lord Madhusūdana, the Supreme Lord, is eternally present in Dvārakā. By remembering that most auspicious of all auspicious places, one destroys all contamination. SB 11.31.23-24

[115] She said, "There is something also from *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*: the ocean did not cover one house of the Yadus. It is the place for the pastimes of the Lord."

[116] Paurṇamāsī said, "These verses about Dvārakā are quoted to show that Kṛṣṇa eternally plays in Vṛndāvana."

[117] Vṛndā again read from *Bhāgavatam:*

> *eṣāṃ ghoṣa-nivāsināṃ uta bhavān kiṃ deva rāteti naś*
> *ceto viśva-phalāt phalaṃ tvad-aparaṃ kutrāpy ayan muhyati |*
> *sad-veṣād api pūtanāpi sakulā tvām eva devāpitā*
> *yad dhāmārtha-suhṛt-priyātma-tanaya-prāṇāśayās tvat-kṛte ||*

My mind becomes bewildered just trying to think of what reward other than you could be found anywhere. You are the embodiment of all benedictions, which you bestow upon these residents of the cowherd community of Vṛndāvana. You have already arranged to give yourself to Pūtanā and her family members in exchange for her disguising herself as a devotee. So what is left for you to give these devotees of Vṛndāvana, whose homes, wealth, friends, dear relations, bodies, children and very lives and hearts are all dedicated only to you? SB 10.14.35

[118] Paurṇamāsī spoke with satisfaction, “If Pūtanā with violent mentality attained the position of a mother, what would Nanda and Yaśodā attain? In this way, through *kaimutya*, Brahmā praises them. Brahmā has thus confirmed that the people of Vraja live with Kṛṣṇa at all times. Everything is resolved.”

[119] Paurṇamāsī said, “Are there any other words left?”

[120] Vṛndā said, “Hear this:

tad bhūri-bhāgyam iha janma kim apy aṭavyāṃ
yad gokule ’pi katamāṅghri-rajo ’bhiṣekam |
yaj jīvitaṃ tu nikhilaṃ bhagavān mukundas
tv adyāpi yat-pada-rajaḥ śruti-mṛgyam eva ||

My greatest possible good fortune would be to take any birth whatever in this forest of Gokula and have my head bathed by the dust falling from the lotus feet of any of its residents. Their entire life and soul is the Supreme Personality of Godhead, Mukunda, the dust of whose lotus feet is still being searched for in the Vedic *mantras*.” SB 10.14.34

[121] Paurṇamāsī said with joy, “From previous conclusions, Brahmā describes his goal of life. Please also see the following:

aho bhāgyam aho bhāgyaṃ nanda-gopa-vrajaukasām |
yan-mitraṃ paramānandaṃ pūrṇaṃ brahma sanātanam ||

How greatly fortunate are Nanda Mahārāja, the cowherd men and all the other inhabitants of Vrajabhūmi! There is no limit to their good fortune, because the Absolute Truth, the source of transcendental bliss, the eternal Supreme Brahman, has become their friend.” SB 10.14.32

[122] Vṛndā said in joy:

deve varṣati yajña-viplava-ruṣā vajrāśma-varṣānilaiḥ
sīdat-pāla-paśu-striy ātma-śaraṇaṃ dṛṣṭvānukampy utsmayan |
utpāṭyaika-kareṇa śailam abalo līlocchilīndhraṃ yathā
bibhrad goṣṭham apān mahendra-mada-bhit prīyān na indro gavām ||

Indra became angry when his sacrifice was disrupted, and thus he caused rain and hail to fall on Gokula, accompanied by lightning and powerful winds, all of which brought great suffering to the cowherds, animals and women there. When Lord Kṛṣṇa, who is by nature always compassionate, saw the condition of those who had only him as their shelter, he smiled broadly and lifted Govardhana Hill with one hand, just as a small child picks up a mushroom to play with it. Holding up the hill, He protected the cowherd community. May Govinda, the Lord of the cows and the destroyer of Indra’s false pride, be pleased with us. SB 10.26.25

[123 - 124] Paurṇamāsī said, “In this way Śukadeva has spoken of his shelter Govinda. His statement shows that Kṛṣṇa cannot give up the cowherds at any time. Kṛṣṇa vows, ‘I am the shelter of the cowherd people of Vraja.’ Please speak further.”

[125] Vṛndā bowing to her said, “I am fully satisfied with this work full of scripture. What more can I ask? But please give me an order. I will keep this book of yours as the center jewel in my necklace.”

[126] Paurṇamāsī said, “That is proper.”

[127] Vṛndā then kept the book as her center jewel on her necklace.

Chapter Thirty

Kṛṣṇa Returns to Vraja

[1] The talk began according to the statements in the Purāṇas, filled with the essence of happiness. In the morning in the assembly of Nanda with his son, Madhukaṇṭha began speaking with a sweet voice, anxious to tell about fulfillment of desire.

[2] In order to defeat Kṛṣṇa, Dantavakra performed worship of *devatās* and did not attend the *rājasūya s*acrifice. When Śiśupāla was killed by the *cakra*, Dantavakra moved like a cart with two wheels broken. Lamenting for a long time, he then considered carefully and pleased Śiva by difficulty austerity for some time. After becoming like Hiraṇyakṣa, desiring to defeat Kṛṣṇa, shameless Dantavakra became disturbed by the power of Kṛṣṇa's *cakra,* and thinking it impossible to defeat him, he became confused. He then thought, "When he leaves Indraprastha I will meet him on the way to Dvārakā and fight him when he is alone. I will fight with a club gained by the mercy of Śiva, which will give victory over all."

[3] Thinking in this way out of madness, taking only his club, walking like a foot soldier with no chariot, he went to Mathurā and waited for Kṛṣṇa to leave Indraprastha, expecting him to come near. He was like a deer waiting for a hunter.

[4] Then Nārada, who helps one overcome all suffering, came there by his own will and saw Dantavakra, like a sick man. He thought, “Dantavakra has suddenly changed his appearance. He looks like Hiraṇyakṣa, and frightens the eye just with the assistance of a club. I will have Kṛṣṇa, who has Lakṣmī on his lap, kill him.”

[5] Nārada, who whose foot-dust is touched by *devatās* and who is beyond passion, thinking in this way, then looked at Dantavakra. Dantavakra looked at him. He approached Dantavakra and spoke crookedly: “O king of Karūṣa! If you worshiped Śiva to be detached from the death of Śiśupāla, then remain in this stance. Why do you not go to Dvārakā? He is tired after killing Śālva with hostility and has no desire to fight. You will win. Why don’t you go?”

[6] Dantavakra spoke in haste “Oh! Oh! Why do you speak like a fool? Śālva has certainly gone to Svarga.”

[7] Nārada said, “I swear to you, this news is not a lie. His Saubha vehicle is now ashes. Burned by the fire of Kṛṣṇa’s club, the iron city has become powdered iron.”

[8] Dantavakra said, “If that is true, Dantavakra’s life is useless.” Saying this, like a madman, not knowing what was favorable or unfavorable, he departed for Dvārakā.

[9] Confirming that Dantavakra’s heart was agitated by madness, secretly laughing, going on a path as quickly as the mind according to his desire, with a clear mind, on the battlefield Nārada met Kṛṣṇa, the goal of the devotees, just after he had killed Śālva and was still eager to fight. He told him about Dantavakra. He revealed that Dantavakra, like Hiraṇyakṣa, was wandering in the sky, looking for him though previously Dantavakra had not considered this. Kṛṣṇa long desired

to go to Vraja. Taking this opportunity and killing Dantavakra, his promise to go to Vraja after all enemies were killed could be fulfilled. He decided to go, and taking permission from all, ordering his charioteer to go as fast as the mind, he departed.

Skillful Dāruka drove Kṛṣṇa's chariot to Mathurā but no one could see its passage though they saw it go north. A streak of light from Dvārakā arrived at Mathurā. They say it was like the chariot of a *devatā.* ||1||

That streak of light gradually faded, but the globe at its tip remained visible because Kṛṣṇa, like the sun, blocked the pervasive darkness of Dantavakra. Dantavakra saw Kṛṣṇa like Nārāyaṇa in the sun. ||2||

Kṛṣṇa saw that he was trying to destroy his chariot with his club while walking on foot. Kṛṣṇa gracefully alighted from his chariot and prepared to kill Dantavakra with his own club. ||3||

The vile fellow began shouting at Kṛṣṇa and the *devatās* began shouting at Dantavakra. When he struck Kṛṣṇa with his club, Kṛṣṇa blocked his blows with his club Kaumodakī. ||4||

Kṛṣṇa played day and night but not too long, since he desired to see Vraja. With his foot he then crushed the chest of Dantavakra, an obstacle to his going to Vraja. ||5||

The *cakra* drank Śiśupāla's blood. Kṛṣṇa satisfied his angry club with the blood of Dantavakra. ||6||

[10] When Dantavakra left his house to come to Mathurā, his brother Vidūratha tried to assist him from afar, out of fear (since Dantavakra said he would kill Kṛṣṇa alone).

Vidūratha, with unbridled mind, equal to Dantavakra in methods and actions, arrived at Mathurā at this time. ||7||

When Kṛṣṇa killed Dantavakra with his club, Vidūratha arrived. When one bug burns in a fire, will not another bug also enter? ||8||

Seeing his brother killed by the club, the fool, covered by his shield, drew his sword and approached Kṛṣṇa, holder of the death *cakra.* ||9||

“Let your body remain in this fight with sword and shield in hand. But what use is your head?” Saying this, Kṛṣṇa cut off his head with his *cakra*. ||10||

The skillful warrior destroys the body of the enemy but not the soul. O Nanda! While people watched, just as Kṛṣṇa had merged the souls of Aghāsura and Śiśupāla into his body, he merged the souls of Dantavakra and Vidūratha into his body. ||11||

[11] Having killed all the enemies, Kṛṣṇa acted as the oar of the boat to help them cross to higher worlds.

[12] Leaving the place known by people as Datihā at the gate of Mathurā, where he killed Dantavakra, the gate facing towards Dvārakā, eager to go to Vraja, he went to Viśrāma for a little rest, bathed and, fully satisfied, made the decision not use his weapons again.

[13] He then gave qualified *brāhmaṇas* great wealth with great devotion from his treasure trove created by his mind. Having done that, he was ready to go, when some traveler going to Vraja saw him and became overcome with confusion.

“Is that is him, rising from his bath?” Kṛṣṇa was trembling, his hairs stood on end, tears were in his eyes

and his voice was choked. He came quickly and asked, “Where is my village?” The person who was asked attained the same condition. Thus he remained stunned for some moments. ||12||

[14] When the person could finally speak, Kṛṣṇa embraced him, and showered him with torrents of tears. Then his Garuḍa vehicle which puts heavenly vehicles to shame took him across the Yamunā. He made the hearts of the *devatās* who had come to see the events unsteady with joy.

[15] I will now describe the character of the people of Vraja, who were completely dependent on him.

[16] When cruel Śālva came to Dvārakā and smashed the city with his iron vehicle, the people of Vraja heard the news from messengers and gave up eating food. They became almost dead. Days and nights passed like death and on the last hour of the last day, they were almost dead. Because the messengers were grief-stricken, they did not come. Nor did travelers come to give news of the fight with Dantavakra. The people of Vraja thus sank in a boundless ocean of suffering.

Some thought it was best to enter fire. Some thought it was better to enter deep water. Others thought that knives or poison or jumping off a mountain was best. When they all reached this unfortunate state, each one made decisions like that. ||13||

[17 - 18] Desiring a cure for their mental anguish, the priest who was their well-wisher went to speak to Nanda: “Have you departed on the path of forgetfulness? You should meet and see this letter which has previously come, telling that Kṛṣṇa will soon return. Previously these letters would save everyone.”

[19] Nanda said, “If he is bound by the enemy, how can that be auspicious?”

[20] The priest said, “The creator cannot alter Kṛṣṇa’s words. Please hear this letter one time according to my instruction.”

[21] When Nanda agreed and everyone gathered, the priest then read the letter to the assembly. Who would not be moved on seeing their eyes like clouds, ready to shower at the priest’s words, which were like *mantras* of Varuṇa? They listened to the letter:

O father! I do not live in Indraprastha or Dvārakā but in this letter. As I live in this letter, keep it in your pocket in place of my direct association. ||14||

[22] Just when the letter was being read, the sound of the Pāñcajanya conch arose in the southern direction on the road to Mathurā. When the sweet sound arose, they all desired to know about it, and began shouting, “Victory, victory!” in astonishment. In great bliss they began running towards the sound with joyful gait.

The women, children, and elders all ran with them, guessing that Kṛṣṇa was coming from Dvārakā, not aware of themselves or who was in front or behind. ||15||

[23] Hearing the sound of the conch spreading everywhere along with the rattling of the chariot and shouts of “Victory, victory!” from the *devatās* in Svarga, they started to become stunned. As they ran forward, when they saw Garuḍa on Kṛṣṇa’s chariot, they could no longer move their feet. Suddenly they stopped and remained standing like trees. When they saw the chariot, they became completely stunned.

Even today the path on which the people of Vraja, on understanding from the conch sound that Kṛṣṇa was coming, went very far away, became stunned, and then started an uproar because of his coming (*āya-rava*) is called Āyara by the people of Mathurā. ||16||

Amidst the music of the *devatās*, shouts of "Victory, victory!" showers of flowers from desire trees, excellent humming of bees, the clatter of the chariot on the road and the uproar from the people, Kṛṣṇa, longing for association with his friends, then met them. ||17||

By his powerful presence, Nanda and all those who came to meeting him, trembling to the extreme, became stunned with *prema* with fear that they would fall on the ground. See the power of *prema.* It also stunned trembling Kṛṣṇa, made him solidify in their embraces, and produced a festival of joy. ||18||

[24] As a cloud gives happiness by its showers, Kṛṣṇa gave happiness by his *rasa.* As lightning decorates the cloud, yellow cloth clothed Kṛṣṇa's body. As a cloud nourishes itself by its movements, Kṛṣṇa moved forward, supporting himself with his graceful movements. As a cloud possesses a body of rain, Kṛṣṇa's body was wet with perspiration. As a cloud rumbles with thunder, Kṛṣṇa produced deep sounds with his choked voice. As a cloud produces showers, Kṛṣṇa wept streams of tears. When Kṛṣṇa arrived, the people of Vraja, coming near, embraced him. As forest burned by summer heat when sprinkled with rain begins to sprout new shoots, Kṛṣṇa's hairs began to stand on end.

The showers of nectar from the *devatās* chanting, mixing with the showers of tears from the cowherds' joy, made the dried up spikes of trees sprout in profusion. ||19||

Seeing his parents and others, old and worn, as if suffering from starvation, as if having been imprisoned by enemies, having undergone great privation, Kṛṣṇa glanced at them with open eyes and by his touch gave them shining bodies. He stood there with joyful eyes. ||20||

He offered respects to his parents, the *brāhmaṇas*, the elders of the family and his seniors, and they blessed him with tear-filled eyes. Embraced by Kṛṣṇa, they embraced him. Those who were junior to Kṛṣṇa offered him respects. ||21||

[25] On smelling Kṛṣṇa's fragrance in the wind, the cows ran quickly to him and began serving him in herds. The sound of their mooing, mixed with the clamor of their hooves and the ringing of their bells, along with a gathering of hundreds of cowherds, spread a rumbling sound through the atmosphere. ||22||

When Kṛṣṇa offered respects on the ground, the cows began sniffing him and with tears in their eyes began licking him. He stood up and began rubbing their necks. They offered their throats to him and began flowing with milk. ||23||

When Kṛṣṇa's fragrance from far off attracted the deer on the ground, the birds in the air, and peacocks on the ground, the deer became stunned and stood like walls while the birds became like a roof and continually surpassed the assembly of cowherds by their surrendered service. ||24||

Though recognizing the animals by species, he did not recognize them individually because they came so quickly. But by seeing their individual movements, he

recognized them. Not only that, but he sprinkled them with his sweet glance of *prema.* ||25||

[26] Paurṇamāsī, thinking of auspicious items to offer to him, quickly came to meet Kṛṣṇa with Vṛndā and Madhumaṅgala. She approached him, and saw him agitated by crowd of the cowherds who were pained by long separation. She addressed him in a pleasant manner:

“Please relieve yourself of mental anxieties. In your absence my body has been crushed. I, Paurṇamāsī, have maintained my life in the hope that you would return. These two are Madhumaṅgala and Vṛndā—absorbed in the future bliss of your coming to Vraja.”

[27] Hearing this, Nanda, Yaśodā and others understood that Paurṇamāsī had arrived. They turned to her in joy, and stood aside, eyes fixed upon her, offering respects, with trembling bodies and folded hands, tears falling from their eyes.

[28] Cool tears of joy flowed from her eyes. Her body trembled, with hairs standing on end. Blessing Nanda, Yaśodā and Kṛṣṇa with her hand that produced joy, she then spoke:

[29] O Nanda and Yaśodā! You have maintained your self-control during this meeting. In meeting, long-lived Kṛṣṇa will be relieved of fatigue. When the heart is at ease, the intellect functions properly. Thus this happiness will be everlasting.

[30] The wise say, “The meeting of summer and monsoon produces an intolerable situation of heat. Their meeting heats the life air of the universe. One must wait for the coolness.” ||26||

[31] One should thus wait patiently in the shade of a cloud or tree, and sit around Kṛṣṇa.

[32] They all sat with Paurṇamāsī under a tree with Kṛṣṇa in the center. Upananda and others were blissful. Śrīdāma and his friends were spreading happiness everywhere. Vṛndā and Madhumaṅgala felt good fortune to be with Kṛṣṇa. Nanda and Yaśodā were the cause of joy in heaven and on earth. They embraced him, became bewildered and shed tears. She then spoke:

After leaving Indraprastha, your son killed Śālva and Dantavakra. In coming here, he has not drunk water or eaten food. ||27||

[33] And, like a dry tree Dāruka, his driver, offering you respects many times, stands with folded hands in front of you. Rise, go to Vraja, bring bathing article and oil and offer them to him so that he can be happy. Then bring Kṛṣṇa, the source of unlimited auspiciousness, to Vraja in the evening.

[34] Kṛṣṇa spoke in a choked voice:

“Why are you unsteady, stunned and tarnished? I have killed all the untiring, sinful demons like Dantavakra and Śālva who caused obstacle to my returning to Vraja, who were cursed by you. Dantavakra, along with Vidūratha, who blocked the gate of Mathurā, has been killed.

With no enemies, everything has become auspicious. It is time to enter Vraja. Balarāma, thinking that I must return, has brought me here. I have kept him in Dvārakā to satisfy the minds of the people who are exhausted from the killing of Śālva and his extensive attacks.

Bringing him here, and pleasing him, I will have him enter Vraja. This will please me.”

[35] Paurṇamāsī said, “That will come to pass. But now you should give everyone happiness.”

[36] Pleased on hearing her words, and finding them proper, some glanced towards their houses and by their desire returned home. Chanting Kṛṣṇa’s name, they brought back loads of suitable clothing and other items gathered through the years. Kṛṣṇa saw those items which surpassed those of the *devatās,* but then he saw the belts and clothing of people of Vraja, like withered autumn lotuses. He sadly glanced at Paurṇamāsī’s face.

[37 - 38] Paurṇamāsī said, “All the people of Vraja, as previously, should offer everything to you. They could not give away all the jewels they received from you at Kurukṣetra or the cows, since they are devoted to you alone. When you began fighting the demons, they gave away everything else as donations to *brāhmaṇas* and *devatās* during sacrifice, in order to create auspiciousness for you. When they heard of your fight with Śālva, they offered the remaining excellent items into fire through the *brāhmaṇas*. All that remains are their bodies which they still maintain and which will be offered as the final offering to the fire. Having destroyed all their wealth to get relief from the grief of separation from you, they have become poor.”

[39] Wiping away his tears with his hands, he then spoke attractive words to Dāruka, “Bring attractive ornaments and clothing.” He then had Dāruka meet with his Vraja servants. With Dāruka they then took from the chariot the best cloth and ornaments. There was no end to that event. Kṛṣṇa then covered the ground with the piles of cloth and ornaments.

Kṛṣṇa gave them the oil, clothing and ornaments along with *cintāmaṇi* gems. All the offered items took on unlimited qualities just as his pastimes are unlimited. ||28||

[40] Through the *cintāmaṇi* gems, Kṛṣṇa filled Vraja again with all the items that the people of Vraja gave up when he fought with Dantavakra. He made Nanda and others abundant with the eight treasures. Kṛṣṇa wore all the unlimited clothing and ornaments give by the people of Vraja. Looking at those items given by them, he did not look at anything else. ||29||

He kept the *cakra* and other *kṣatriya* items in his chariot. He asked his mother for his flute, staff and peacock feather. Holding them on, he developed a special beauty. With his tears, he astonished Dāruka, who became motionless like a picture. ||30||

Those who served with various items quickly achieved perfection. Those who moved about everywhere became free of error. Those who came close with affectionate hearts became similar to him. Kṛṣṇa with tears in his eyes accepted them all as the best. ||31||

When Kṛṣṇa came from Dvārakā to Vraja and the people ran about to relieve him of fatigue, they did not consider elder or younger or equal in age, who was a controller and who was controlled. No one identified another person with designations. ||32||

What to speak of the main persons of Vraja serving Kṛṣṇa with affection and what to speak of them serving Dāruka with affection! No one has ever seen how affectionately they served Kṛṣṇa’s four horses. Seeing how they even served the chariot, Dāruka, moved by

their affection, became stunned, motionless like a picture. ||33||

Kṛṣṇa saw the present people of Vraja with the same age, form and nature as when he left Vraja to kill Kaṃsa, even though it was many years later. This was not surprising. Since Kṛṣṇa meditates on Vraja continually, how can lowly time affect it? Even the time of final destruction cannot change Vraja at all. ||34||

After Kṛṣṇa, his father and others had finished their bath and dressed, Kṛṣṇa sat down with them comfortably and ate. After that he went to his chariot surrounded tightly by a series of carts and met hundreds of his friends. ||35||

When he entered his house in Vraja there was singing, dancing and music. There were shouts of “Victory, victory!” as well as auspicious Vedic chanting, showers of flowers, joyful exclamations and the clatter of chariot and carts. The cowherds jumped with joy and the *devatās* stood in one group. ||36||

All the people wanted to perform *ārātrika* to him using jewel lamps produced by the *cintāmaṇi* gems, but did not have the opportunity. In a group they quickly performed *ārātrika*, sometimes in order and sometimes not, which they had done previously in a particular order of senior to junior on the road. ||37||

The women of Vraja headed by Yaśodā, jewels among women, took handfuls of gems and at the edge of the town, welcomed Kṛṣṇa with singing, dancing and music, with shouts of “Victory, victory!” With their music they surpassed the wives of the *devatās* and the stars in the sky. ||38||

Surrounded by thousands of relatives, Nanda and Yaśodā brought Kṛṣṇa, a lost treasure, brought back from the fortress of Dvārakā into their house. ||39||

[41] He saw the auspicious Vraja dwellings, as if new, with carts on the road, filled with pots of ghee and yogurt and houses spread among the trees. He then donned cowherd dress given by relatives and sat in the assembly area decorated with auspicious pots and spread with soft grass. For a few moments he made the time auspicious in the joyful company of his relatives.

The cowherds' eyes became dedicated to his sweetness. Their ears became dedicated to his sweetness. Their noses became dedicated to his sweetness. ||40||

[42] After increasing everyone's happiness, taking everyone's permission with clear perception, he entered the inner chambers with all his friends to see his mother, whose heart was filled with affection. Consoling all the other women relatives along with his mother who maintained her life till his return, he politely asked her permission. Then along with his friends he ate and praised all the sweets that his mother had gathered, while she wept uncontrollably. Taking her permission, he then went to the nicely decorated bedroom with his friends. Yaśodā, desiring that he sleep well and have no obstacles, then thought of what to prepare for him the next day and went to gather the items.

Their bodies trembling because of long separation, his servants served him well since they had lots of time to practice in his absence. ||41||

[43] When he performed his sleeping pastimes, his *sakhya-bhāva* satisfied all his friends.

Having killed all the demons, rid the earth of its burden and installed Indra in his position, Kṛṣṇa went to Vraja with a happy heart. His friends embraced him and he lay down. Asking the news in his absence, kissing them, touching heart to heart and thigh to thigh, he then fell asleep. ||42||

[44] The reciter concluded, “O Nanda! We two have repeatedly said that you do not have any separation from Kṛṣṇa. But you did not hear this attentively. We have repeatedly broadcast this fact till we have become senseless. Since we now speak only of meeting you are now rejoicing.” ||43||

[45] When Madhukaṇṭha’s voice choked in bliss, all the others spoke in praise: “We do not know if this talk produces joy or sorrow, neither joy or sorrow, or both joy and sorrow. You two have sprinkled us with Krsna’s talks even when he was far away from us, revealed through messengers and surpassing all sweetness.” ||44||

[46] When the members of the assembly were overcome with happiness, the Vraja bards began singing, making all blissful by describing Kṛṣṇa’s return after killing the demons.

> You pierced the heart of cruel Śālva and produced auspiciousness for the Yadus. Hearing news of Dantavakra from Nārada, who bestows joy, you mounted your chariot faster than the mind and conquered all, simply by traveling.
>
> By your effulgence you enjoyed yourself near Mathurā, where the demon Madhu had been previously killed (by Śatrughna). When Dantavakra saw you, you killed him with your club while glancing with lotus eyes. You protected all people at that place.

Performing actions for the benefit of the universe, you killed Vidūratha. Pleasing your relatives in Gokula, your best friends, though far away, you crossed the Yamunā with great attraction for Gokula. You blew your conch loudly and nourished the joy of those born in Vraja, who prayed for your victory. They came and joyfully surrounded you.

You gave happiness to your mother. Tears flowed from her eyes. You desired to stay here always. Recognizing your home, coming to the people of Vraja you glanced upon them. You remain here. Victory, son of Nanda, who gives victory by his joy! ||45||

[47] When the beauty of night increased, Madhukaṇṭha spoke in the assembly of Rādhā, while she watched Kṛṣṇa:

When Śālva attacked Dvārakā everyone thought of entering fire or water and giving up their lives. But if all women other than the highest *gopīs,* whose very lives were Kṛṣṇa, had the fire of separation within their hearts, what was the need for external fire? ||46||

When all the women felt the fires of separation, in dreams they would see Kṛṣṇa coming to Vraja. They spoke of this among themselves. Because of this they developed faith and focused on the path with unblinking eyes. ||47||

When the people of Vraja heard the conch, they quickly ran to him almost jumping. The *gopīs* became stunned, but attained Kṛṣṇa in their minds, since they had no bodily identification at all. ||48||

As the *gopīs* could not go to Kṛṣṇa, their friends put them in carts to go to Kṛṣṇa.

By his glance which showered nectar everywhere, they regained strength and in gratitude he gave them the highest goal. ||49||

When Kṛṣṇa touched them all, they recognized his touch in joy though they had fainted. But those who did not faint did not know his touch (because they fainted). If these opposite reactions did not occur, the power of his touch would not be known. ||50||

It is possible to describe the state of the *gopīs* and of ordinary people because their emotions remain fixed for some time. But Rādhā's condition is not so, for at every moment she displays an unsteady mind, fainting, movement, immobility and other symptoms. ||51||

When Kṛṣṇa put on his clothing and ornaments others followed. But the *gopīs* did not, for they saw Kṛṣṇa as themselves out of *prema.* When he decorated himself, they believed that he also decorated them since they had the same mind as him. ||52||

When Kṛṣṇa desired to enter Vraja, his chariot was most convenient for them and him, for neither of them could move a step since they were all bound up by the creepers of each others' glances. ||53||

When the cowherds clamored in joy and Yaśodā and others offered him worship, the *gopīs* trembled, became stunned, shed tears, changed color, became choked up, perspired, developed goose bumps and fainted. ||54||

When Kṛṣṇa went to the bedroom with his friends, the *gopīs* thought to themselves that this was a suitable time. If we did not meet him we would turn to ashes. What else can be our happiness? He has come to Vraja and remains here. ||55||

When Kṛṣṇa relieved the earth of her burden by killing the enemies and came to Vraja, all the people of Vraja and Rādhā also saw him. But she saw him with unblinking eyes, tears, shivering body, and spent the night exhausted. ||56||

[48] Madhukaṇṭha concluded: “At the time of separation you considered separation from him to be union. Now I see it is the opposite. When there is union, it seems like separation. It is better that I remain silent on this topic.” ||57 - 58||

Hearing the previous events from the reciter, Rādhā, showing her knowledge of *śruti* and *smṛti,* worshiped her lover and went with him to their private abode.

Chapter Thirty-one

Freeing the Gopīs from Obstacles

[1] In the morning in Nanda's assembly in the presence of the prince of Vraja, Snigdhakaṇṭha began speaking.

[2] After Kṛṣṇa touched everyone's heart by meeting them in the evening in the palace, the people of Vraja came in the morning to meet him, and remained in his company outside in order to make their lives joyful. Following his usual conduct in the morning, he then went to the house of his mother with all his friends.

When he arrived he became the subject of all the women's eyes and immediately offered respects. According to the hierarchy, he offered respects to all and received blessings from them. He then sat on a seat with tears in his eyes. ||1||

He immediately drank her breast milk, while tears soaked his body and his hairs stood on end. With shaking body, he constantly soaked her feet with sweet tears from his eyes. ||2||

Having returned from Dvārakā after a long time after killing the demons, on another day he sat in Yaśodā's lap and she looked at all his limbs and arms. Comparing those to his previous condition, she saw some marks of injury on his body. Her crying resembled as an early morning *kīrtana* and made others cry as well. ||3||

[3] When both Yaśodā and Kṛṣṇa became faint-hearted and the elder women also began crying incessantly, they

then began scolding Yaśodā for making Kṛṣṇa cry. Then after all guilt was removed, they made Kṛṣṇa and Yaśodā, the cause of universal bliss, look at each other in bliss. Pulling Kṛṣṇa towards her, she made him sit on half of her seat, like a boy of *paugaṇḍa* age. He held her chest like a small boy and put on ornaments. Doing such auspicious acts, he gave happiness to all those looking for some time.

[4] Taking her permission with difficulty, he then went with his friends to Nanda, the abode of all happiness.

When he came to the assembly, the crowd roared like an ocean. All their limbs swelled with joy. Like hungry *cakora* birds, Nanda and the others surrounded him and, though skillful at drinking the nectar of his attractive clothing, could not be fully satisfied. ||4||

Kṛṣṇa was now a cowherd of *kaiśora* age, with flute and peacock feather. Forgetting his previous suffering, he showed skill at exhibiting *prema* for them in new ways. Seeing this, Dāruka had no faith that Kṛṣṇa would return to Dvārakā. ||5||

His father and his relatives along with *brāhmaṇas* gave blessings to him, and made his head damp with their tears. In this way, embracing him, his friends moistened his chest with their perspiration. And in this way, his juniors moistened his feet with their tears. Ordinary folk thought this was some sort of bathing festival. ||6||

At this festival there were groups of *māgadhas* reciting family history, *sūtas* reciting Purāṇas, *vandis* offering praise, skillful musicians, and various types of drummers displaying their talents. Youngsters, youths and elders danced with abandon and madness, joyful on having

attained Kṛṣṇa. Women came from their houses spontaneously and danced. ||7||

All the people of Gokula, men and women, danced as they had previously done at his birth and became filled with joyful enthusiasm. It was the like the difference between the joy on possessing treasure and the joy on regaining the treasure after it has been stolen by a thief. ||8||

Some, like clouds, from a high place began showering milk, ghee, yogurt, turmeric and oil on everyone. When the ingredients fell upon them, the *devatās* began dancing and worshiped the people with shouts of "Victory," flowers and verses. ||9||

Everyone became made mad at the festival. Friends did not recognize Kṛṣṇa. Relatives did not recognize Nanda and his brothers. No one recognized the others. The wives of Nanda's brothers did not recognize Yaśodā. The followers of Rādhā did not recognize her. Taking the ingredients in their hands, drowning in the ocean of bliss, they did not recognize anyone. ||10||

What more can be said?

Madhumaṅgala danced shouting, "Hari bol, Hari bol!" He began reciting Kṛṣṇa's exploits by listing the demons he killed. In joy he grabbed people's clothing, arms, and hands, laughed loudly and performed mock battles. ||11||

Playing blissfully, the cowherds satisfied the *brāhmaṇas, sūtas,* dancers and *vandis* with splendid gifts of incomparable treasures. They gave each other glittering gifts enjoyed by Kṛṣṇa. All became most generous givers. ||12||

[5] Giving up shyness, Nanda, the protector of Vraja, also played, jumped in the water, and coming onto the bank, joyfully gave cloth and ornaments to all people, even the costume makers. He fed them all delicious food. Experiencing a great festival in Vraja, and receiving such great respect in Vraja from all people, he forgot about Dvārakā and the Yadus.

[6] Putting Nanda and few others in front, Kṛṣṇa then went to the forest to see the cows with his friends.

The son of Nanda went to the forest to search for the cows but the cows found him first for, smelling his fragrance emanating from far off, they came running and surrounded him. ||13||

He became satisfied with their loud bellowing. The cows surrounded him and seemed to dance as they followed him around. Being obstructed by Nanda and others who said, "*Jhari, jhari,*" the cows obstructed Kṛṣṇa and relished the competition. ||14||

He then stopped the cows by playing special notes on his flute and gazed at each one of them. Asking for them by name, his father and friends then picked out the cows and called them. ||15||

Seeing each cow, he began shedding tears. The cows' hearts melting on seeing him, Nanda and the others also began crying. Ah! The place surpassed the Gaṅgā. All directions were covered in water for a long time. ||16||

[7] He made the cows turn around again and again and then herded the cows along with the assigned cowherds. Putting Nanda in front, he went to the cow pens and got pleasure from milking the cows as before. He worshiped the cows as if they were *devatās,* and then ate the food packed by his mother with satisfaction. Giving happiness

to all his friends, he then spent the evening as previously.

[8] Then next morning, which gave joy to all, Upananda out of bliss called all the people and invite Kṛṣṇa. In this way everyday Abhinanda and others invited Kṛṣṇa for a big festival. In this way those related to Abhinanda, and those related to those people also invited him.

From the time that Kṛṣṇa returned, there was a continual increase of music, singing and recitation which recounted the killing of Kaṃsa and his return to Gokula. When he went to a house, that increase in glorification became even more evident. ||17||

From the time Kṛṣṇa returned from Dvārakā to Vraja, all the relatives of the people of Gokula and all the cows became happy. ||18||

[9] Dāruka then thought affectionately: “Kṛṣṇa resided in Dvārakā to kill the demons but like a person with unlimited debts to pay he stays forever under the control of Vraja.” ||19||

[10] To conclude, the reciter spoke:

Seeing this, the *devatās* spoke after reflecting:

“Kṛṣṇa who holds the flute in his hand for creating joy in Vraja went to the Yadus’ house to kill Kaṃsa and other demons. With *cakra* in his hand and Garuḍa as his vehicle, he killed the demons and now, he has returned to Vraja. Look at him dance skillfully just as he did previously.” ||20||

[11] Many days had passed in the greatest happiness. I will describe tomorrow morning another incident that occurred. Having spoken in Nanda’s assembly, in the evening he spoke a different topic to Rādhā’s assembly:

[12] As the autumn moon makes the lotus blossom, Kṛṣṇa extinguished the pain of separation and gave bliss to the people of Vraja. The hearts of his dear *gopīs* became intense with desire, “After he has come back, he should not go and come again.” They all rejected that. I will now describe what Kṛṣṇa thought internally:

We both have desire burning within us. But it is now difficult to rid ourselves of shame. ||21||

Because I felt shame in front of others I went to Mathurā to kill Kaṃsa. I have come to Vraja to save the *gopīs.* But I cannot give up the shame in my heart. ||22||

The one meeting at Kurukṣetra was like a drop of water in a heated frying pan. But the events in Vraja with persons who have prayed for me to come should not be empty. They must be the opposite. ||23||

Waiting a while, I will remain neutral.

[13] Thinking in this way for a moment, he then considered as follows:

[14] But what will happen if I remain indifferent? Though I have given up my house which is the essence of pastimes and stayed away a long time, it is evident that the *gopīs* have *prema* for me which has reached the state of madness. It is such that the whole universe knows it.

When I left they said, “Let us directly approach Mādhava and stop him from going. What can our family elders and other relatives do to us?” (SB 10.39.28) They forgot all shame and loudly cried out, “O Govinda! O Dāmodara! O Mādhava!” (SB 10.39.31) The minds of those *gopīs* are always absorbed in me, and their very lives are ever devoted to me. For my sake they have abandoned everything related to their bodies. (SB 10.46.4)

Constantly remembering the activities their beloved Kṛṣṇa had performed in his childhood and youth, they sang about them and cried without shame. (SB 10.47.10) One of the *gopīs*, while meditating on her previous association with Kṛṣṇa, saw a honeybee before her and imagined it to be a messenger sent by her beloved. (SB 10.47.11)

[15] Uddhava also said, “The *gopīs* of Vṛndāvana have given up the association of their husbands, sons and other family members, who are very difficult to give up.” (SB 10.47.61) Balarāma on coming to Vraja described their words: “For Kṛṣṇa’s sake, O descendant of Dāśārha, we abandoned our mothers, fathers, brothers, husbands, children and sisters, even though these family relations are difficult to give up.” (SB 10.65.11)

[16 - 18] “O bee, why do you sing here so much about the Lord of the Yadus, in front of us homeless people?” (SB 10.47.14) Clearly Rādhā has spoken this. Because of this, I am completely shamed. If they are all freed from other husbands, then everything will be harmonized. As revealed by the talk in the assembly of sages at Kurukṣetra, I am the *antaryāmī* who can fulfill my own desires. I can eliminate the distaste by destroying the illicit connection caused by my unconventional actions. By the common rule of marriage I will destroy the illicit relationship in Gokula, where everyone is filled with friendship for me, which is rare for the sages. Waiting cannot be tolerated, for delay will lead them to death. What to do now is not clear.

What misfortune! The withered faces of the *gopīṣ* make me depressed. I cannot remain calm on seeing the lotus face of Rādhā. Both of us think like this. ||24||

Not able to understand Kṛṣṇa, broad as an ocean, Paurṇamāsī and Vṛndā met with Madhumaṅgala and then approached him. Noting his depressed condition, she announced herself and gave him blessings.

She spoke with a gentle smile, “Ah! It appears that you are thinking about having a married relationship with the *gopīs,* since you are *cintāmaṇi*, able to fulfill all your desires.”

[19] Kṛṣṇa said, “Why do you speak like this suddenly?”

[20] Paurṇamāsī said, “Because though this is what you desire, you have not attained it.”

[21] Kṛṣṇa said, “Please explain clearly what you want to say.”

[22] Paurṇamāsī said, “It is well known that just as Rukmiṇī reigns supreme in Dvārakā, Rādhā reigns supreme in Vṛndāvana. Still, that has not been achieved. Do you not accept Rādhā as you accept Rukmiṇī?”

[23 - 24] Kṛṣṇa spoke with a shameful smile: “The people of Gokula do not see Rādhā as they see Rukmiṇī.”

Paurṇamāsī said with regret: “This is not a fault of the people of Gokula but a fault of misfortune. Rādhā’s parents and other parents had agreed that you were to be their husband. Consulting with Vasudeva, Garga advised otherwise so it could not happen. Then I, using illusory powers, produced an illusion of the *gopīs* getting married––a dream that seemed like the waking state. Thus they think with regret that these persons are their husbands.”

[25] Kṛṣṇa said, “Though you produced this as an illusion, still there is a fault.”

[26] Paurṇamāsī said with a smile, “Unlike Bhīṣmaka who thought of giving Rukmiṇī to someone else, the fathers of the *gopīs* did not think of giving their daughters to anyone else. And what harm is there if they think of those persons as their husbands? What fault arises from a dream?”

[27] Kṛṣṇa said, “They may be faultless but still there is fault of thinking of them as husbands. Because of thinking of them as husbands they slept with them.”

[28] Paurṇamāsī said:

I do not accept these two faults. They said, “Our dear Kṛṣṇa, as an expert in religion you have advised us that the proper religious duty for women is to faithfully serve their husbands, children and other relatives. We agree that this principle is valid, but actually this service should be rendered to you. After all, O Lord, you are the dearmost friend of all embodied souls. You are their most intimate relative and indeed their very self.” (SB 10.29.32)

[29] These are their words. The words establish you as their husband. “If you are the dearest to all beings, then you are our dear husband. We accept you as our natural lover with a love that does not allow us to be touched by others.” Thus their actions are proper. This is the meaning of the verse.

[30 - 31] Some who were serving their husbands left them for you. (SB 10.29.6) And others were not allowed to leave. (SB 10.29.9) Because they did not have suitable bodies, but had developed enough affection by practice, they were allowed to serve you in suitable bodies (after giving up their material bodies). For instance, some said, “Our dear Kṛṣṇa, as an expert in religion you have

advised us that the proper religious duty for women is to faithfully serve their husbands, children and other relatives." (SB 10.29.32) Śukadeva also accepts the *gopīs* relationship with Kṛṣṇa when speaking about the *rāsa* dance: "The cowherd men, bewildered by Kṛṣṇa's illusory potency, thought their wives had remained home at their sides. Thus they did not harbor any jealous feelings against him."(SB 10.33.37) The word *dārān* (wives) indicates that the husbands could not properly discern the *gopīs'* real nature (thinking of them as their wives). The complete lack of discrimination was caused by your *māyā* endowed with all powers at all times, which has complete devotion to you alone.

[32] At the time of their marriage, all the forms produced by illusion to cheat the grooms who are inferior to you could not be detected from the real forms of Rādhā and the other *gopīs*. The men took those forms as their wives even in bed. Thus the real *gopīs* did not actual marry them or have any relationship with them in bed.

[33] You have revealed this in teaching Uddhava: "I alone am their dearmost beloved and, indeed, their very self. My fully devoted cowherd girlfriends struggle to maintain their lives somehow or other." (SB 10.46.4-6) The *gopīs* say "O Uddhava! It is indeed regrettable that Kṛṣṇa (*ārya-putraḥ*—husband) resides in Mathurā. Does he remember his father's household affairs and his friends, the cowherd boys?" (SB 10.47.21) Śukadeva says, "Lord Kṛṣṇa's young wives shone like streaks of lightning in a mass of clouds." (SB 10.33.7) When the *gopīs* ask a question in *Gopāla-tāpanī Upaniṣad,* Durvāsā says, "He is your husband." Brahmā says in *Brahma-samḥitā*, "Kṛṣṇa is the supreme lover and the *gopīs* are his beloveds."

[34 - 35] The revealer of the two great mantras (eighteen-syllable and ten-syllable Kṛṣṇa *mantras*) mentions the words *gopī, jana* and *vallabha. Gautamīya-tantra* explains the ten-syllable *mantra* in two verses, giving consecutively two meanings according to etymology. The *mantra* may be explained as worship of Brahman (since *vallabha* can mean light) or worship of the Lord. Then finally to avoid any confusion, Kṛṣṇa is described as the husband of the *gopīs* as the conclusion. To take the meaning of *pati* as something other than "husband" one must take the crude etymological meaning. *Pati* means one who protects. (But such interpretation is not suitable.)

At the time of attracting the *gopīs* to the *rāsa* dance, it is stated that they gave up their mothers, fathers, sons, brothers and husbands. (SB 10.29.20) If one wants to play with words then the word *pati* in this statement does not mean husband. Thus there should be no fear of criticism that Kṛṣṇa enjoyed someone else's wife (since he is the *gopīs'* eternal husband).

In the above verse (SB 10.29.20) the word *putra* does not mean their own sons but the sons of the sisters-in-law. Śukadeva simply says, "They fed milk to infants." The statement does not mention that the infants were their sons. I have also unsuitably called Kṛṣṇa's relationship with the *gopīs* illicit in order to create deception by conforming to Garga's words that the girls marry other men. The people of Vraja also thought in this way.

[36] Madhumaṅgala spoke with difficulty: "Though everyone in Vraja is happy to meet you, the *gopīs* have withered away. They are like inedible stones in a pile of spread out white rice." ||25||

[37] Vṛndā said, “It is not false that the *gopīs* became joyful like the other people of Vraja when you suddenly appeared after the time of coming had expired. But seeing your indifference, they have now wilted away. But smoke rises increasingly from Rādhā’s body.” ||26||

[38] Paurṇamāsī said, “O Kṛṣṇa, when Rādhā vomits tears because of your indifference, the directions become covered with smoke. Fire is famous because it burns its support, wood. If your *prema* is the same, and burns up her body, *prema* will be condemned.” ||27 - 28||

[39] Kṛṣṇa, the good fortune of the women of Gokula, on the pretext of wiping stains of pollen that had fallen on his forehead, wiped his tears with the edge of his cloth and spoke, “It should be made auspicious by smearing it with affection.”

[40] Supported by Madhumaṅgala and Vṛndā, Paurṇamāsī, understanding Kṛṣṇa’s desire, took his permission to create joyful pastimes and went to all the *gopīs* who were living together in a lonely place with the desire to make Kṛṣṇa their husband. Seeing them all withered up, she also withered. They were like the moon covered by Rāhu, like a line of creepers agitated by a strong gale in a dense forest, like poetic ornaments in an assembly ignorant of knowledge of poetic rules, like pure *bhakti* without material desires amidst effulgent practitioners of *karma*, *artha* and *dharma*. Breaking their grief with blessings, she then spoke:

“Let all the people of Vraja be happy, with full *rasa* and all qualities, like a lake filled with water having no contamination. If the lotuses wither what fault does the bee have?” ||29||

[41] Hearing this, staring at the ground, not giving up their paleness, the *gopīs* remained silent. Then one of them spoke in a choked voice, “Why would the lotus not wither? Though the lotus remains in water, if the sun (Kṛṣṇa) which makes them blossom did not remain in Scorpio (winter), it would become brilliant in Aries (hot season) (and make the lotuses bloom).” ||30||

[42] Paurṇamāsī said, “This is not the sun’s fault, but the fault of time.”

[43] The *gopīs* said, “Since you have become accomplished in *yoga* practice nothing surprises you. But the actions of time against us have surprised us.”

[44] Paurṇamāsī said with tears in her eyes, “Since his birth, Kṛṣṇa has done nothing that can be criticized since he is the giver of happiness to everyone, the leader of Gokula, and has now returned to Gokula. Now, the time of intense bliss has arrived and will shower nectar with a thousand qualities. But it will not destroy that which gives you shelter (like fire which destroys ghee and wood). I desire to hear about the activities of all your friends who are suffering the most.”

[45] That *sakhī* filled with longing, with tears in her throat, remained stunned for a moment. Then Paurṇamāsī saw the agreement letter they had written:

In Vṛndāvana we are divided in two groups. One is made of unmarried girls. The other is made of the rest (mature or married). ||31||

Those in the second group, being intelligent, should be accepted as the abode of intelligence just as in this world those who are not omniscient are accepted as omniscient. ||32||

Just as the owner of the cow takes the cow as his, our husbands take us as their property. But they are our husbands in name only just as there are *dhava* plants among the trees. ||33||

If we ever desire to see someone other than Kṛṣṇa as our husband, let us burn in fire. Let us remain with Kṛṣṇa as our husband. ||34||

Many times we have decided to enter fire.Giving up shame in the fire, we will attain him whom we desire. ||35||

What other thing is there that brings some pleasure to our beloved? It breaks our hearts to cause shame for him. ||36||

If our family and fathers are shamed, we will again enter fire to attain our goal. ||37||

All the young women who shed tears know one thing: without him we have no recovery and no life. ||38||

[46] When the letter full of the highest words was read and the assembly burned with hot tears, Paurṇamāsī hid her desires with regret. She then spoke contrary words in order to test their love and in order that every syllable of her words would enter their ears:

“O *sakhīs*! There are some intelligent women. They have pure love for Kṛṣṇa as the abode of auspiciousness. Their *prema* produces fear and shame in their body, which obstruct that *prema.* Taking that *prema* endowed with fear and shame as an obstruction, the women, desirous of benefit, wish to destroy their married condition. But that is not proper.”

[47] Hearing this, and remaining silent for a moment, with pale bodies they glanced here and there and then spoke.

[48] “Let those obstructions see the light of day. Others do not have this obstruction. And they are thus unsuitable for understanding such obstructions. In the absence of *prema,* there will be a desire for gaining those obstructions. The queens of Dvārakā developed an understanding of those obstructions:

> Though Kṛṣṇa’s feet were next to the queens and in private, those feet appeared more and more beautiful at every moment. Which woman could give up those feet which Lakṣmī never gives up? SB 1.11.33

[49] When the women heard this and began weeping, unable to speak properly, Paurṇamāsī, with tears in her eyes, began to think: “Those who do not know that the *gopīs* are Kṛṣṇa’s *nitya-siddha* lovers think that ultimately Kṛṣṇa is their illicit lover *(upapati*). If those who know that the *gopīs* are his *nitya-siddha* lovers still criticize the *gopīs* (myself), how can that make Kṛṣṇa happy?” ||39||

[50] She thought: “I did not criticize this idea in order to protect them from the infamy of being wives of low class men. But I have revealed the *gopīs’* inner feelings. Actually, it is not possible to think of Kṛṣṇa as one’s husband at all times and it is possible to worship Kṛṣṇa as the *upapati.* But why should one reject marriage and accept *upapati* affairs? When Uddhava heard the *gopīs* speak, even they criticized the *upapati.* They said, “Prostitutes abandon a penniless man, subjects an incompetent king, students their teacher once they have finished their education, and priests a man who has

remunerated them for a sacrifice. Birds abandon a tree when its fruits are gone, guests a house after they have eaten, animals a forest that has burnt down, and a lover the woman he has enjoyed, even though she remains attached to him." (SB 10.47.7-8)

[51] With tears she said aloud, "O Rādhā, Candrāvalī, Lalitā, Viśākhā, Bhadrā, Śyāmā, Padmā, Śaibya! Please listen! The king of *cintāmaṇi* stones, the sapphire, will soon fulfill your desires. We will work like *brāhmaṇas* to make this happen." ||40||

[52] Vṛndā said, "Kṛṣṇa cannot give up Vṛndāvana or your group. This maintains my life. His statement is not a laughing matter." ||41||

[53] Madhumaṅgala said, "I am called Madhumaṅgala and will produce the auspiciousness of spring (*madhu*). For in the spring, Kṛṣṇa, taking your hands, will marry you." ||42||

[54] After Paurṇamāsī freed the *gopīs* from obstruction, one *sakhī,* happy as one of the group, came to her. In private she informed Paurṇamāsī on behalf of the group, for grave people do not reveal their minds in an assembly in order to please people with differing opinions, "Without fear I speak. They did not reveal their minds."

The *gopīs* then said in choked voices: "Just as Rāvaṇa created obstacles for Sītā and Śiśupāla created obstacles for Rukmiṇī, living in someone else's house is an obstacle for Rādhā and the other *gopīs.* How can that be the eternal situation for friends of Kṛṣṇa?" ||43||

[55] Paurṇamāsī thought to herself: "That is true. But the shadow of Rāhu does not remain on the moon for

long. The moon in its eternal position illuminates everyone's heart." ||44||

[56] She said aloud, "Though you are held in check by being someone else's' wives, you have some good assistance. How can that be rejected?"

[57] Then the *gopīs* with pale faces began speaking: "Please listen, O Paurṇamāsī! All of the women of Vraja, not attaining Kṛṣṇa as their husband, are suffering greatly. They have dried up because they are considered condemned after getting married to someone else. Their minds are afflicted on being separated from the person whom they love and united with those whom they hate. They have been scolded and obstructed by the so-called husbands who constantly doubt them. The intolerable separation from their beloved caused an intense agony that burned away all impious *karma*.(SB 10.29.10) In such conditions, because of the pain caused by their great attraction, passing each moment as if they were living in a cage of fire and thinking each moment to be a *kalpa*, they then obtained cessation of their separation from him. But then they saw that he was indifferent to them and became inundated in shame. Cursing themselves, they became almost dead. What more can be said? Being most delicate inside and outside, from childhood they were like does who could not give up an attractive, neighboring forest where a hunter pierced them with his arrows. They attained a remarkable condition under control of insurmountable and terrifying fear which shakes the hearts of anyone who sees or hears about it. Who can indifferently and without mercy think joyfully that this is the nature of *rasa*? No one can. Maybe some *sakhī*, like time, can wait till the end of the *kalpa."*

[58] Paurṇamāsī, weeping and trembling to the extreme, embraced the *gopīs* who had fainted, removed their pain, and blessed them to attain their desires. She arranged for them to go to their *sakhīs* and returned to her leaf hut. Vṛndā went to her forest.

[59] Madhumaṅgala went and explained all the auspicious news to Kṛṣṇa.

[60] Rādhā in extreme pain sent her *sakhīs* to test Kṛṣṇa's sincerity. Hearing of this, Paurṇamāsī sent her the following attractive letter:

O Rādhā! You are named Rādhā. Your father is Vṛṣabhānu. Your mother is Kīrtidā. Yaśodā is your mother-in-law. Your friends are Lalitā and Viśākhā. The forests where Kṛṣṇa plays are your dwelling place. Kṛṣṇa is your husband at all times. I have not known anything else. I do not know anything else. I will not know anything else. ||45||

[61] This prayer to Kṛṣṇa by the highest devotees states the final condition:

Holder of Govardhana! Your father and mother are Nanda and Yaśodā. Rādhikā is your beloved. Śrīdāma and Subala are your friends. Balarāma is your elder brother. The flute is your music. The peacock feather is your ornament. Nandīśvara is your home. Vṛndāvana is the grove near your house. O Lord! I know nothing else. ||46||

[62] The reciter concluded, "I will discuss other subjects tomorrow morning. May you please us at all times with your unbroken promise to save your devotee since you two are now united." ||47||

[63] Pleased by Snigdhakaṇṭha’s concluding recitation of Vedic *mantra,* everyone returned home. Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa went to their house of pastimes with desire.

Chapter Thirty-two

Solving the Problem of the Married Gopīs

[1] The next day in Nanda's assembly in the presence of Kṛṣṇa when all were completely happy, Madhukaṇṭha spoke.

[2] They all prayed for the welfare of Vraja and Kṛṣṇa and manifested continuous bliss. By actions they depicted Kṛṣṇa's continual acts of universal kindness, his pastimes with his friends, accompanied by singing, dancing, and attractive music. In this blissful sacrifice, the music, dancing and singing became one for the whole day and night.

[3] During this time, Dāruka remained with his chariot. Thus Nanda and others became filled with doubt. Then supremely intelligent Kṛṣṇa, facing them, asked his father with humility during a blissful topic, "Oh! I see that today your do not seem very satisfied."

[4] They all began laughing with a mixed of harshness and mildness. They said, "You are the cause of our satisfaction and act only for our benefit. What will come of such a question?"

[5] Then the *cintāmaṇi* of Vraja, Kṛṣṇa, thought to himself, "They do not at all think of my kingly powers, but they have understood that the chariot is a cause of my leaving."

[6] He then said, “The chariot is fixed on fulfilling your desires. You should not think otherwise. Giving you up though you suffered, I went to kill Kaṃsa and went with enthusiasm to Dvārakā to destroy those who afflict the devotees. There, through the words of Balarāma and Uddhava, my life became bound up by you, as if bound by a rope. Thus I have come here. I will suffer if you are not happy. ||1||

[7] Hearing this and looking at Nanda, everyone said, “We will be happy if you make your house here as you did in Dvārakā. Living elsewhere will only give us pain.”

[8] Hearing these words, Kṛṣṇa looked at the ground and thought to himself, “They have used the word “house” which refers to getting married. But they do not know what is on my mind. I will call Balarāma and Rohiṇī here to make favorable arrangements with the help of Paurṇamāsī, who is my assistant. This will produce happiness in Vraja as previously.”

[9] He said aloud, “I will bring my brother and his mother to Vraja.”

[10] Everyone said, “The *cakora* birds which derive happiness from the full moon attain everything from the autumn full moon.”

[11] Kṛṣṇa then gave an attractive order to Dāruka: “O charioteer! Go to Dvārakā on the swift chariot and bring everything suitable for this place. Listen to the news about the killing of Dantavakra. Speak about my past and future in Vraja and bring Rohiṇī and Balarāma. Also have Uddhava follow. Please request them privately, saying that they should come so that I may return quickly to Dvārakā, because I am attached to Vraja.”

[12] He then ordered, “Balarāma should bring the parrot and *śārika* bird as well.”

He went from Vraja and according to instruction, brought Balarāma, Rohiṇī and Uddhava from Dvārakā. Kṛṣṇa was astonished on seeing them. ||2||

When Balarāma walked on the road according to Kṛṣṇa’s order, the people of Vraja saw them together as previously. One thing was clear: Kṛṣṇa was the center of all things among the people of Vraja. ||3||

When Balarāma and Rohiṇī met Yaśodā surrounded by friends and Kṛṣṇa, the cowherds’ bliss increased. The *devatās* thought that the size of Gokula had doubled. ||4||

As previously they all worshiped Balarāma. When Kṛṣṇa was also present, it became most astonishing. ||5||

[13] Snigdhakaṇṭha said with a smile, “For his own purposes Vasudeva stole Kṛṣṇa and Nanda’s daughter, fooling Kaṃsa to make him think that Kṛṣṇa was his son. That son who merged with Vasudeva’s son now protects his father. Please look.” ||6||

[14] Madhukaṇṭha said, “What to speak of Balarāma, Uddhava looked exactly like Kṛṣṇa. This amazed Dāruka.” ||7||

[15] Dāruka spoke what he thought to Uddhava in private: “All the actions of the people of Vraja seem to be filled with the illusions of a magician. Since it is so pervasive and beyond comprehension, I cannot publicly speak about it. I am worried because they engage Kṛṣṇa in herding the cows. By his *māyā*, he has made you also look like a cowherd. Please save me, since I am dumbfounded.”

[16] Uddhava said, “Though you are most intelligent you have become so foolish. You are called by three names–“standing on the right, standing on the left and driver of the chariot,” but even today you do not understand. Not everyone is qualified to live in Vraja. Brahmā prays for the good fortune of touching the foot dust of these people.”

[17] Let us return to the subject now.

In the night which brought all happiness, the two mothers endowed with all qualities, melting internally and externally, drowned in bliss on embracing. Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma regretfully interrupted the embraces with kind words. ||8||

[18] As the night passed in bliss, every morning the cowherds took turns in inviting Balarāma, Nanda and Kṛṣṇa to their homes along with Yaśodā and Rohiṇī. No one could be proud of being the only ones to invite Kṛṣṇa.

[19] When these invitations took place for a long time, Kṛṣṇa took part with great happiness. After killing Kaṃsa, when Kṛṣṇa sent Nanda back to Vraja, he had entrusted to his representatives the flute, and horn to Stoka-kṛṣṇa and Subala. Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma decorated them as well as other friends with these items and other special ornaments. What more can be said? He brought all the messengers who had gone and come back to Vraja and gave them suitable gifts and praised them. In this way everyone became happy.

[20 - 21] Taking all his favorite items such as the flute which were stored by Yaśodā, he then played joyfully with his friends. Now hear what happened after Balarāma returned!

[22] On the second day after he arrived, Balarāma met many *gopīs* who were inundated with Kṛṣṇa *prema* and were broken-hearted with longing. He satisfied them quickly with blessings and consoling words along with Uddhava. He also sent a message: “Kṛṣṇa kept the parrot and *śārika* bird you sent to him through us by his side with great care. Just as he brought me here, he has brought the birds here. You should teach the birds verses containing his promises which come true.”

[23] After two days, Balarāma along with Rohiṇī and Uddhava respectfully approached Paurṇamāsī in secret. Madhumaṅgala and Vṛndā were also there. Knowing they were anxious to create auspiciousness, when they exchanged ideas she let Balarāma hear about Nanda’s desire for Kṛṣṇa’s proposed marriage, which she had heard from Madhumaṅgala.

[24] When Balarāma and Uddhava agreed to the proposal, they told Rohiṇī who then became aware of the *gopīs s*ituation. She spoke without duplicity: “When this proposal came to Nanda, I said that it would have to meet your approval but you also would not have any other idea.”

[25] When all agreed with Paurṇamāsī, Balarāma and all others in Vraja became inundated with bliss. Nanda and Yaśodā asked her the particulars and accordingly they arranged the marriage.

[26] Nanda and Yaśodā came to Paurṇamāsī. Showing all politeness, with her permission they approached and spoke: “By the power of your austerity you have brought Kṛṣṇa to Vraja. We are ashamed to speak of our unlimited desire–now we desire that Kṛṣṇa get married.”

[27] Paurṇamāsī said in bliss:

If by good fortune the intelligence of the speaker and listener are one, all goals can be achieved. This is the opinion of those know the omens. ||9||

[28] According the omen scriptures, I ask you with heart filled with desire. Please tell me which of the unmarried cowherd girls of Vraja you desire as his wife?

[29] Yaśodā said, “There are many like Dhanyā who worshiped Kātyāyanī and remained single in order to marry Kṛṣṇa. Those girls should marry him.”

[30] Paurṇamāsī said, “Why Rādhā and other extraordinary *gopīs* are not considered unmarried?”

[31] They said, “Ah! If they were also unmarried that would be most auspicious. Why would we not accept them? But who among them are unmarried?”

[32] Paurṇamāsī said, “Rādhā and others are all unmarried.”

[33] They said, “O *guru* of the intelligent! We do not understand.”

[34] Paurṇamāsī said with a laugh, “They are unmarried. They have not been married.”

[35] Nanda said, “How is that?”

[36] Paurṇamāsī said, “When Garga, according to the advice of Vasudeva, ordered the fathers to have their daughters married, I invoked my *māyā* which creates a dream spreading over all people, because I knew the desire of the girls for Kṛṣṇa. I carried out an illusion of marriage for those girls. Those forms of the girls created by my *māyā*, thinking of other men as their husbands and performing actions in married life, functioned without being noticed as illusory by others; therefore

Kṛṣṇa in his youth should be married with the young girls of Vraja and remain without opposition.” ||10||

[37] Hearing all this, the lotus eyes on their spotless faces blossomed in joy. Submerged in joy, they nourished Paurṇamāsī with their silence.

By the sudden touch of Paurṇamāsī’s words indicating the pure status of Rādhā and other *gopīs*–pure like the Gaṅgā flowing in spring season, cooling like the shade of a desire tree, cooling like the application of sandalwood, relaxing like rays of the moon, Nanda and Yaśodā gave up their pain. ||11||

[38] After a moment’s silence they said with choked voices “Does Kṛṣṇa know this?”

[39] Paurṇamāsī said, “Yes, he knows because I told him. But being shy, he is reluctant.”

[40] Yaśodā said, “What about Rādhā and others?”

[41] Paurṇamāsī said:

They know from me. Though having plenty of water, the *cātaka* bird, desiring only the water from the clouds, offers its life into fire. ||12||

[42] As long as they think they cannot attain him, they remain confounded in their hopes, not knowing a method to attain him. They tolerate the pain caused by ropes in the form of living with other husbands. If they accept him as their husband, this situation will not arise.

If the *cakora* bird, after wandering in the darkness with fearful clouds and owls for a long time, comes to its home with the white rays of the moon, it no longer desires the darkness. How will Rādhā and others desire a house with fake husbands?” ||13||

[43] Nanda said, “What about the girls’ parents?”

[44 - 45] Paurṇamāsī said, “Understanding the secret from me they said in extreme joy, “When the female deer are freed from the forest-like mouth of the tiger, they will take shelter of the male deer who is Kṛṣṇa.” ||14||

Nanda said, “Garga said that there would be obstacles in doing this because all the lotus-eyed girls who had relationship with Kṛṣṇa would fall into deep darkness in separation from him. It is difficult to reconcile his words.”

[46] Paurṇamāsī said with a laugh, “Garga knew the difficulties that would arise after Kṛṣṇa went to Mathurā. If these women marry your son now, it will be most auspicious and it is not proper to prevent that in Vraja.”

[47] Nanda and Yaśodā said with a sigh “How will other people or the in-laws regard this?”

[48] Paurṇamāsī said, “We will solve that problem. But tomorrow you should call all the people of Vraja for performing a festival.”

[49] Tasting the nectar of her words, Nanda and Yaśodā then bowed at her feet and went home. By speech and letters they called the *brāhmaṇas* and others and began a festival like Kṛṣṇa’s return to Vraja. They invited everyone according to Paurṇamāsī’s advice. Please hear the events of the next day.

[50] Spreading the great festival at dawn, Nanda made even the earth unsteady. At this festival uncountable numbers of people came. Yaśodā brought Paurṇamāsī to her side and then brought all the young women including Rādhā. Though they could not come because of being almost dead, out of fear of disobeying Yaśodā’s order they came. Though Vraja flourished by the shower of happiness caused by Kṛṣṇa’s return, the *gopīs* were like

creeper sprouts starved of rain. They were like fish suffering when the water dries up in the hot autumn sun. They were like *cakora* birds about to die in the absence of clouds. Seeing them, Yaśodā glanced at Paurṇamāsī with tears in her eyes. Yaśodā, whose character is most praiseworthy, looked at the *gopīs* while they looked at her. Her eyes were agitated by tears which fell upon the forms of Rādhā and the other *gopīs,* making them shine like the sun. Yaśodā glanced at Paurṇamāsī and seemed to offer those forms to Paurṇamāsī.

[51] Paurṇamāsī, imitating Yaśodā with her glance, accepted the *gopīs* as Kṛṣṇa's wives and then spoke: "You must invite everyone to this festival. Call everyone from everywhere."

[52] Hearing this, some women went to some of the houses to invite people, and then came back. They whispered to Paurṇamāsī: "This is astonishing. It is simply astonishing. I see Rādhā and the others here, and I see them in the houses."

[53] Paurṇamāsī said, "Let others who have discrimination go."

[54] They went and as previously gave the same news.

[55] The news about this amazing arrangement reached Nanda's assembly. On the instruction of Paurṇamāsī, Nanda brought all the men and women of Vraja together. Paurṇamāsī began meditating. In meditation she brought forth Viṣṇu-māyā.

[56] Everyone looked up and saw her, dark in complexion, with eight arms on her sides, holding weapons in her hands, riding on a lion flying in the air. Her prowess was praised by the *devatās.* ||15||

[57] Sitting on her lion in the air, coming close, she spoke:

O Nanda! O Yaśodā! Do not doubt. O cowherds! I have by my will created duplicate forms of the *gopīs* to counteract Garga's obstruction. The cowherds accepted these forms as their wives. They did not marry or sleep with the real forms of the *gopīs.* ||16||

I knew my brother would accept these women as his wives. How could I neglect protecting them from fault since I am most caring? ||17||

[58] During Rāma's time, I performed astonishing actions by taking the help of Agni to assist Sītā. Rāvaṇa came to her forest as a false mendicant to break her vow of chastity and Sītā recited prayers to me out of fear. I appeared in the sacrificial fire of a householder. Having great powers, I hid Sītā, produced another false Sītā, and kept the real Sītā with me. Rāvaṇa took the false Sītā to Laṅkā. When Rāvaṇa was killed by Rāma, making the false Sītā merge into the fire, I manifested the real Sītā with chastity intact. Vyāsa has explained this in his verses of the *Kūrma Purāṇa* to relieve people of grief.

Let there be thousands of chaste women. I do not praise them. They accept one husband and normal rules. Instead I praise the famous *gopīs* who gave up normal rules of *dharma* and with careful consideration, thought of Kṛṣṇa as their husband out of intense *prema.* ||18||

[59] When the marriage is accomplished in the future the words, "thought of Kṛṣṇa as their husband," in the last statement should be replaced by "worshiped Kṛṣṇa as their husband." ||19||

Thus these *gopīs* had no fault. Kṛṣṇa showed them great mercy. If he shows mercy to someone, how can that person fall from *dharma* even a little?

[60] Kṛṣṇa has spoken of their purity: “I am not able to repay my debt for your spotless service, even within a lifetime of Brahmā. Your connection with me is beyond reproach. You have worshiped me, cutting off all domestic ties, which are difficult to break. Therefore please let your own glorious deeds be your compensation.” (SB 10.32.22) No one can make them fall from attraction to Kṛṣṇa, which is the real *dharma*. This was realized by you in Garga’s words:

> *ya etasmin mahā-bhāgāḥ prītiṃ kurvanti mānavāḥ |*
> *nārayo ’bhibhavanty etān viṣṇu-pakṣān ivāsurāḥ ||*
>
> Demons cannot harm the demigods, who always have Lord Viṣṇu on their side. Similarly, any person or group attached to Kṛṣṇa is extremely fortunate. Because such persons are very affectionate toward Kṛṣṇa, they cannot be defeated by demons like the associates of Kaṃsa. SB 10.8.18

[61] Blissful like blossoming lotuses, everyone began speaking, desiring to hear the message again. She then laughed and said, “Having said this repeatedly, what more can be said? Everyone present, please look!”

Saying this, she glared at all the *gopīs’* houses and not giving up her glance, brought all the false forms by an invisible route to the festival area. Everyone then understood that the real forms were similar to the false forms.

[62] Kātyāyanī then said, “According to the situation I make these two types of forms appear and disappear. Because of this, the secret was not revealed. But now

please understand the difference between the real forms and the others.” ||20||

[63] Hearing this, Yaśodā and others began to inspect the two types. Surrounding the *gopīs* they began asking them privately:

“The eye of the jeweler must be used for testing when one wants to know the difference between a gem and a piece of glass. Devī, having ordered us, has made us the testers to find the real and imitation forms of the *gopīs.”* ||21||

[64] Devī said, “Put the two groups together and inspect them.”

[65] Having done this, everyone said, “Far away from the sun, the moon shines brightly. When the moon comes close to the sun, it loses its luster.” ||22||

[66] Nanda said, “O auspicious goddess! What more will be accomplished by this auspiciousness?”

[67] Devī said, “O father! All the original *gopīs* should go to their fathers’ houses and all the false ones should go to houses of their so-called husbands.”

Hearing this everyone’s ears became blissful. All the castes then began shouting, “Victory, victory!” All lamentation ceased and joy arose. Everyone took permission and then went home.

All the witnesses of Kṛṣṇa and the *gopīs* met together out of joy and remained there embracing each other. Like the moon and stars after the monsoon, Kṛṣṇa and the *gopīs* regained their luster with the destruction of depression. ||23||

Everyone ate at the festival and then returned home from Nanda's place. All the fathers took their daughters home in bliss. ||24||

[68] Snigdhakaṇṭha asked, "I have heard that before eating Durvāsā came."

[69] Madhukaṇṭha said:

That is true. Out of bliss I forgot about that. Now I will explain that. When Nanda and others felt themselves successful and wanted to go home with their daughters, the respectable daughters suddenly did not want to go. They explained, "Even if Devī showed those false forms, there is nothing to purify us of living in someone else's house except fire. It is not proper to enter our father's house at this time. We must offer ourselves into the purifying fire. We have each put on our heads these written pledges. What more can we say?"

[70] Hearing this, their mothers, filled with grief, took the pledges from them and showed them to their husbands. They showed them to others and then to Nanda and others. Everyone became astonished.

[71] The letters read as follows:

If we ever break our vows to Kṛṣṇa in body, mind or words, in waking or dream states, let our bodies burn in the trial by fire in Nanda's assembly. ||25||

[72] Hearing this, everyone became filled with sorrow. By her mind, Paurṇamāsī then called Durvāsā, who arrived wearing bark as his dress. Though he shone because of his austerities, when he goes to the Himalayas, his ferocious nature disappears. Everyone saw him as the person who could bring joy to all. They gained his mercy by offering respects. Then he spoke:

[73 - 74] “I am Durvāsā, whom everyone fears. I am the giver of fear. Kṛṣṇa who gives unconditional benefit to all, should be considered the supreme shelter. One should worship him without conditions such as performing *dharma* with expectations of wealth. You worship with no conditions. Among you, Rādhā and the *gopīs* are exceptional. I do not give fear to them. Rather I am controlled by them. I have come now, knowing the frustration of Rādhā and the *gopīs*. Please hear my request. They have done nothing wrong. Previously they asked me, “Who is Kṛṣṇa to us?” I made this remarkable statement. “He is your husband.” This is described in the *Gopāla-tāpanī Upaniṣad*. Remembering the pain of separation that they experienced, I committed an offense to Rukmiṇī the most excellent queen, and to her husband Kṛṣṇa.[14] My infamy is described in the *Dvārakā-māhātmya* of the *Skanda Purāṇa.*

[75] Everyone in confusion said, “O lord! We now know that these women were not married to other men. But now they have gathered together and are lamenting in depression.”

[76] Giving a loud laugh, Durvāsā spoke again, “Ah! O mothers! If you test yourselves by jumping into fire out of grief, what is the use of that endeavor? If you make the attempt, the fire will turn to ashes by the heat of your chastity. The fire of my austerity cannot be blocked. Have them enter the fire, make an oath to me, the form of great blazing fire, and offer respects with your hands and head.”

Saying this, he took everyone along with Kṛṣṇa, and brought the *gopīs* outside to the outskirts of Vraja.

[77] Having gone to the outskirts, Durvāsā, taking on the form of fire, by his effulgence turned the place into ashes. The *gopīs* entered the fire and spread their hands to Durvāsā. In bliss, they remained cool like the Gaṅgā and made everyone peaceful.

All the *gopīs* entered the fire of Durvāsā as a test. Seeing the women with tears in their eyes in longing for him, Kṛṣṇa, previously agitated in mind, became covered in tears. Our hearts are now agitated because of this. ||26||

[78] Considering this I conclude:

> If these women were not pure Kṛṣṇa could not have mercy on them. If they blaze with that mercy, what can the lowly fire do? What to speak of fire, what can the *bāḍava* fire[15] do to them, or the blazing rays of the sun? What can the rays of Śiva's fire of destruction do to them? ||27||

When the *gopīs* manifested exclusive devotion to Kṛṣṇa and according to their vow, entered and came out of fire, even the edge of their clothing did not become soiled what to speak of being burned. The *gopīs* remained young chaste girls. ||28||

[79] Taking the permission of all at the proper time, making Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma happy, Durvāsā disappeared. When this happened and everyone ate, what more need be said about the purity of the *gopīs?*

The *gopīs* were worshiped by those who were previously their fathers-in-law and mothers-in-law. Showing respect to them, the *gopīs* were worthy of praise by the three worlds. ||29||

Mothers, fathers and relatives brought these unmarried *gopīs* to their original homes. Offering respects to

Yaśodā, Nanda, and Paurṇamāsī and their followers, they returned home on carts. Flowers fell from heaven and earth. There were shouts of “Victory, Victory!” as well as singing, dancing and music, giving gifts in charity and *brāhmaṇas* chanting. ||30||

[80] These most modest girls dedicated to Kṛṣṇa alone, freed from great danger, were considered by their parents to have been rescued from death. The parents considered them the most delicate, youthful girls.

Coming out of the prison of the illusory houses of fake husbands, the girls, purified by fire, gave bliss to all their friends in the inner chambers. They were cared for on their mothers’ laps, by their fathers’ glances, and by the affection of their friends. ||31||

Recognized by all as the wives of Kṛṣṇa, the girls were cared for and worshiped by their parents and others. Not hearing anything, not seeing anything and not aware of anything, they thought only of Kṛṣṇa’s form and qualities in their hearts at all times. ||32||

[81] Snigdhakaṇṭha asked with zeal, “What happened to Dhanyā and other unmarried girls who were in pain?”

[82] Madhukaṇṭha said, “Seeing the firmness of Rādhā and others in the fire, they remained there at the test and then went with them to their fathers’ houses.”

[83] Snigdhakaṇṭha said, “Then what happened?”

[84] Madhukaṇṭha said, “After three or four days passed in bliss, Paurṇamāsī, making the parents hearts filled with the desire of their daughters’ marriage to Kṛṣṇa, she hastily went to Nanda’s assembly. She spoke with a pleasant smile:

“O Nanda! Vṛṣabhānu and others are joking about your family lineage. It is not purely cowherd lineage but mixed because it is accepted that the line comes from Yadu *kṣatriyas.”*

Hearing those joking words related to the impending marriage, Nanda looked at his brothers with a smile. Knowing that someone from Vṛṣabhānu’s assembly was present, Madhumaṅgala spoke with a smile:

“Vṛṣabhānu and others, coming from an *ambaṣtha* mother and the best of *brāhmaṇa* as a father, are called *vaiśya abhīras*. They also cannot be considered pure *vaiśyas.* Vṛṣabhānu’s’ grandfather’s sister’s husband gave his daughter to Devamīḍa, best of the Yadus. One cannot trace any other lineage. Do not talk any more about mixed caste based on gross pride but see the previous personalities in the family.”

[85] After three or four days passed in blissful exchanges of the heart and everyone was happy with joking, the fathers of the girls who were attached to Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma sent messengers. Holding auspicious articles in their hands then approached Nanda Mahārāja. Many messengers came to seal the relationship between Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma as grooms and the parents of the girls. They piled up many valuable, auspicious items in front of Nanda. Understanding, Nanda smiled pleasantly and with some embarrassment said, “What is this? What is this?” Respecting the messengers and feeding them, he ordered them to take rest. Not only did Nanda act in this way, but his brothers also acted similarly.

[86] When all the articles were offered to Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma, Balarāma who previously paid his debt of love by accepting the girls in his mind without a marriage

ceremony, inspected the items when the messengers spoke about them. Kṛṣṇa who had not been married secretly previously, embarrassed to accept the gifts, acted as if he had not heard the words of the messengers. But considering that the mothers and fathers of the girls would be saddened and that Balarāma would be put at fault by his rejection, he accepted the gifts as if not knowing what they were for.

Kṛṣṇa accepted the cloth and ornaments sent as gifts by the brides' fathers with embarrassment. However at that time, a festival arose on earth and in heaven. If the root of the tree receives water all the branches become splendid. ||33||

When Kṛṣṇa accepted the cloth and ornaments sent by his in-laws the singing and dancing in heaven and on earth pleased Rādhā and the other *gopīs.* ||34||

O Śrīdāma! Do not tremble. O Subala! Stop your hairs from standing on end. How amazing, Subhadra! Stop perspiring. Speaking in this tricky way about Kṛṣṇa at the gathering for planning the wedding, Madhumaṅgala *brāhmaṇa* glanced at Kṛṣṇa who was downcast with shame, and laughed gently. ||35||

[87] Nanda spread various gifts in the marriage hall and, giving them to messengers, dispatched them. He sealed the marriage with Rādhā and other *gopīs* through these gifts.

Rādhā and the *gopīs* accepted the clothing and scents sent by Yaśodā while displaying *sāttvika-bhāvas*. Though far away, Kṛṣṇa became scented by that fragrance. ||36||

[88] When three or four more days passed in bliss, Paurṇamāsī, sitting in the house of the brides, noticed that the brides were without enthusiasm for the

marriage. She smiled and said: “I think that you desire to partake of this marriage which has been arranged according to your request.”

[89] Laughing they said, “What do we know? But you know everything about the previous conditions and the present situation.”

[90] Paurṇamāsī said, “Enough of this crooked talk. Come together and call the astrologer.”

The cowherds began laughing. Proud of their family lineage and eager for the marriage, respecting the order of Paurṇamāsī in practical terms, they called some *brāhmaṇa*s. Bringing the followers of the fathers and the astrologers who loitered at Nanda’s gate, she decided the auspicious date for the marriage and drawing up a chart the best ingredients, she put important men in front and sent the chart to Nanda. In the letter, the astrologers fixed the time for the marriage for Balarāma and Kṛṣṇa.

[91] Kṛṣṇa’s date:

The astrologers reviewed the time at which beautiful Kṛṣṇa’s desires could be fulfilled. They recognized that the time when the cows come home (evening) was auspicious for the ceremony. ||37||

[92] Nanda said, “O Paurṇamāsī! The evening time is most auspicious for all the girls. That is suitable for all of them. But since the girls are unlimited, how can all the marriages take place at once?”

[93] Madhumaṅgala said with a soft smile, “O king! Why worry about this? My dear friend has various powers. I will send out weapons, clothing, crowns, sticks, cosmetics, garlands, flutes and foot dust as his proxies.”

[94] Paurṇamāsī said with a smile to Nanda while looking at the faces of the brides' fathers, "Let the vulgar *brāhmaṇa* laugh. This will all be arranged by my Yogamāyā. By that, you will inconceivably appear in all places simultaneously like a *devatā*."

[95] Nanda said in bliss, "That I suddenly have the power to appear in many places at once is your power only. Know that I follow you obediently."

[96] Paurṇamāsī said, "O Nanda! Later you must consider who among the people of Vraja take shelter of me. Now, call Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma and have them put on *tilaka."*

[97] Nanda then brought together the *vandis, māgadhas* and *sūtas* of cowherd and *brāhmaṇa* birth and, placing the women in the inner chambers, had *svasti-vacana* performed along with praises, music, and song. The delighted *devatās* showered blossoming *pārijāta* flowers. The fathers of the brides then put special *tilaka* on Kṛṣṇa's and Balarāma's forehead using the excellent hands of the priests. Nanda was not aware that his gravity had disappeared because of the joy.

As he gave joy to the whole universe, Nanda is known as bliss incarnate. After a long time with no son, he obtained a son. Though having a son, Yogamāyā bewildered him. When the women who were like medicine for his life surrounded his son as his wives, he gave the best gifts out of intense bliss. What more can be said? But he did not offer himself because it seems he still feared Kṛṣṇa may leave again. ||38||

[98] When the *brāhmaṇas* desired proper wealth, Nanda, desiring abundance, gave gifts to the *brāhmaṇas* and glanced at Madhumaṅgala. Madhumaṅgala said, "I am

not astonished at anything in your house because the most astonishing treasure Kṛṣṇa who is the source of all astonishment resides here. That treasure is in our hands. What shall I ask for, what should I do to complete things?”

[99] When the laughter finished, Nanda sent cloth and ornaments suitable to the complexion of each auspicious bride through the chief *brāhmaṇas* and friends. ||39||

[100] The speaker concluded: “I was previously overjoyed at Kṛṣṇa’s marriages in Dvārakā. I will be overjoyed at the marriages of Kṛṣṇa in Vraja. But when I think of or speak of the marriages in Dvārakā, my heart is unsteady like lightning. Ah! Look everyone! I am continually happy in Vraja with the weddings.” ||40 - 41||

[101] After the morning talk proceeded in this manner, in the evening Madhukaṇṭha described in detail about the *gopīs.* After satisfying all listeners, he went to his room. Rādhā went to the chamber of Cupid with Kṛṣṇa.

Chapter Thirty-three

Marriage Adhivāsa Ceremony

[1 - 2] The next morning in Nanda's assembly, after the night created happiness in the private assembly of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa, Snigdhakaṇṭha spoke freely. In order to realize the sequence of events, I will combine the two talks.

[3] After Balarāma's wedding, Kṛṣṇa's wedding took place. I will describe that.

Ekānaṃśā (*māyā-śakti*), famous as the sister of Kṛṣṇa in Vasudeva's line, was invited by Nanda and Yaśodā using bonds of affection created by Vṛndā, as if she had used a special *mantra* to call her. First happiness was invoked with auspicious singing and music.

Ten-million marriages took place at the same time. There were billions of musicians and singers. The simultaneous singing in heaven and on earth produced auspiciousness. ||1||

Music and singing arose in all places. Singing and music stopped in Svarga because the *devatās* eager for the wedding accepted the earthly music. ||2||

Those who were to speak or sing managed to speak and sing in the most excellent manner. ||3||

Gokula surpassed the heavenly airplanes with its ingredients, pavilions, fruits, canopies, gates and trees. ||4||

[4] Joy increased and hearts blossomed–it would seem, like moons and lotuses. (When the moon is full the lotuses bloom) Or they were like the moon and ocean. The moon arises from the ocean and the ocean becomes full because of the moon. ||5||

In Dvārakā, Kṛṣṇa married sixteen-thousand princesses at once. Thus there were sixteen-thousand fathers present. What is astonishing is that, considering the ten-million marriages in Vraja, the marriages were like many rivers flowing into the ocean. ||6||

It was astonishing that the number of people attending the marriages was unlimited. But it was more astonishing that all those people attended each of the unlimited marriages.

Inconceivably, each house was not very large but held all the people. And none were aware that they had expanded themselves in all the houses. ||7||

[5] Paurṇamāsī has spread the influence of Yogamāyā everywhere. Now the faultless auspiciousness of all the marriages of Kṛṣṇa will be described.

But it is impossible to describe the marriages because if everyone in the universe were to describe them all at once or individually, it could not be done. ||8||

[6] I will describe Rādhā’s marriage to the best of my intelligence, since it was the most extraordinary.

When there was music at Nanda’s door, at Vṛṣabhānu’s door not only did dancers dance, but all the people danced excitedly. ||9||

The enthusiasm of the musicians was constantly devoted to Kṛṣṇa in the marriage. The music combined with the

rhythm nourished everyone’s enthusiasm like a battle. ||10||

“Hey! Quickly come here!” “Give that! “Take that!” Those who came received objects.

In this way others helped enact this astonishing festival. Hear what I say. Respectable people gave up pride and acted simply as servants. Overwhelmed with happiness at the festival in Vraja, they immediately gave charity. ||11||

[7] On the day of the *adhivāsa* ceremony, with the sweet moon rays emanating from all the blossoming faces, the mothers of the bride (Rādhā) and groom treated all the other fortunate women– intimate friends having sons–as equal to themselves. They entered the houses, going here and there, each performing auspicious acts while they associated with each other. Full of bliss, they all began singing auspicious songs.

All the women, filled with affection, sang about the wedding of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa, at the houses of the two mothers. Inspiring each other, laughing and laughing exuberantly, they sang spontaneously. ||12||

[8] They sang a song taught to them by Paurṇamāsī:

> Rādhā is the full moon. O Kṛṣṇa, with a flute in your hand! O protector of the family of Nanda! Victory to you! Kṛṣṇa, victory to you! ||13.a||
>
> O Kṛṣṇa, freeing Rādhā from suffering! O Kṛṣṇa with attractive face! Destroyer of time in Gokula! Victory! Victory! Kṛṣṇa! Hari! ||13.b||
>
> Giver of fortune to Rādhā’s friends! Giver of skills! Most eminent in pleasing Gokula! Victory! Victory! Kṛṣṇa! Hari! ||13.c||

Kṛṣṇa, controlled by Rādhā's good conduct! You shine in Gokula, decorated with auspicious objects. Victory! Victory! Kṛṣṇa! Hari! ||13.d||

You made Rādhā your wife! You are filled with joy. You kill the demons in Gokula. Victory! Victory! Kṛṣṇa! Hari! ||13.e||

You saved Rādhā's life! You are the wealth of Vraja! You are the swan in the lake of Gokula. Victory! Victory! Kṛṣṇa! Hari! ||13.f||

You are the source of Rādhā's love. You are the best lotus! You are the stem of Gokula. Victory! Victory! Kṛṣṇa! Hari! ||13.g||

You are the ornament of Rādhā's ornaments. You have destroyed the fault of leaving Vraja! You are the king residing in the heart of Gokula. Victory! Victory! Kṛṣṇa! Hari! ||13.h||

[9] After performing auspicious rites, uncovering all happiness, they bathed Kṛṣṇa and Rādhā according to the rules in their houses.

[10] Bathing the groom:

People saw Kṛṣṇa devoid of outer clothing, wearing only a soft inner garment in order to bathe. His body conquered the beauty of a sapphire with no covering. ||14||

Applying massage oil, seeing the beauty of his glossy body, thinking he was beauty itself covered with the water mixed with scents, they became stunned. ||15||

Affectionate people performed all these actions on Kṛṣṇa, who appeared to be bathed in the scented oils. They thought that this was most auspicious. ||16||

Seeing Kṛṣṇa radiant after the bath, with the effulgence of a sapphire, those performing the actions with affection felt the bath was complete. How could the auspicious, radiant beauty which became fresher at every moment completely satisfy those people who became greedy to see more of it? ||17||

Not only did those who bathed Kṛṣṇa achieve fame by the increase of his beauty, but householders who heard the auspicious news also became famous. ||18||

[11] When bathing him with scented water from gold pots was finished, his relatives carefully placed him on a jeweled dais and became happy by attentively drying his limbs.

When drying his body with soft cloth, a relative saw that his body had turned golden. With fearful eyes he looked curiously at Kṛṣṇa. ||19||

Some had Kṛṣṇa put on attractive, washed cloth and some arranged the cloth. ||20||

[12] He sat on cotton cushion and someone desired to dress his hair. There has been some delay in describing the wedding which was to be quickly performed. The wedding procession will be slightly described. Things will now be described in summary.

The turban, sapphire earrings, throat ornament, the Kaustubha, the crown, rings, the pearl necklace, the belt, anklets, foot ornaments and clothing pleased the people present there. ||21||

[13] To keep the auspicious time for the marriage, the two mothers called Nanda’s family priests, through some prominent *brāhmaṇa* boys, putting married women in

front. The priests went to the pavilion decorated with all auspicious items.

[14] Now the auspicious bath of Rādhā with its festivity will be described.

[15] While Rādhā and the other *gopīṣ* went to their fathers' houses, Kṛṣṇa, though feeling great longing for them, felt great shyness. A particle of a wave of the ocean of the *gopīs'* possessiveness, with the thought that he was theirs, then occupied his mind as well.

[16] Some women understood this but acted as if ignorant—as if Kṛṣṇa was indifferent to Rādhā. She heard such talks in private and then ended up in complete distress.

[17] Rādhā did not consider that Kṛṣṇa had accepted her as his wife because she had developed distrust of the whole world since her mind was trembling out of great longing. Even when she was happy she was distressed because of her longing. And thus when she heard descriptions of Kṛṣṇa, which seemed to strike her like a club, she would lament. To reveal this to her friends, she spoke using disguised words.

[18] "When he was previously far away, I suffered because of his indifference. Now I do not suffer. His happiness and the happiness of Vraja is my happiness."

[19] The *sakhīs* said, "O Rādhā! We do not understand your words because you speak with a broken voice."

[20] Rādhā said, "O friends! I say this. Previously when I thought of Kṛṣṇa when he was far away, I would suffer. Now thinking of him in Vraja, I also suffer."

[21] Everyone said with tears in their eyes, “Ah! We always suffer on seeing your condition. Do not think that our present condition of happiness negates this.”

[22] Rādhā said, “Can you think of greater happiness than his coming to Gokula?”

[23] Everyone said, “If he accepts you as his wife–which is now happening.”

[24] Rādhā said, “One does not sprinkle water on a burned body. Rather the pain increases by sprinkling water.”

[25] Everyone said, “We are not consoling you with words sprinkled like water. Understand that we are sprinkling nectar.”

[26] Rādhā said, “How is that?”

[27] Everyone said, “All our messengers that went have returned. They describe his secret condition. When your father sent ornaments and cloth to the groom, Kṛṣṇa wore them all. At that time, his hairs stood on end–piercing his jacket, and his trembling made his belt jingle.

Moreover, when your father sent priceless jeweled *tilaka* suitable for marriage, a smile came to his face, which he tried to hide to maintain his grave demeanor. But it spread happiness to all people.” ||22 - 23||

[28] They said, “O Rādhā with doe-like eyes! He has great attraction for you. We fall at your feet. Give us some astonishing bliss.”

[29] When this show of attachment took place, a nurse arrived and spoke with affectionate anger: “O beautiful girl! What are you doing here? The time for you *adhivāsa* ceremony has come. Your mother is calling you.”

[30] Hearing this from the nurse, all the *sakhīs'* hands started quivering in bliss. This made Rādhā's hands quiver. Having her rise, they all went to her mother's house. While going there, attractive drums sounded at the gates of Nanda's and Vṛṣabhānu's houses.

As the auspicious thundering of drums spread everywhere, the *sakhīs* attentively went to her mother's house though they stumbled along the way. ||24||

[31] Going there, they illuminated the group of women who were singing and holding auspicious pots.

[32] The group of *sakhīs* with shining teeth went to the bathing area on the order of her mother along with shy Rādhā.

Thinking that Rādhā would look radiant after taking a bath and wearing ornaments and clothing, the *sakhīs* dressed her in fine cloth, making her astonishingly beautiful. ||25||

The oil mixed with perfumes and turmeric were suitable for other women, but not for Rādhā. Her body was more fragrant that the pulp made from the essence of the best scented sandalwood. ||26||

Since her body was naturally glossy, fragrant and attractive, the *sakhīs* did not apply much of the substances. On this occasion of auspiciousness, they applied a little of the unguents by slightly touching them to her. ||27||

[33] They removed oil from her body using purified *lodhra* extract. Rubbing excellent turmeric on her body, they led her to the bathing area in a lower place and had her sit down. There were attractive, faultless jeweled-pots containing jewels, perfumed water and potent

herbs. The place was carefully scented with incense made of the best ingredients. Everyone's efforts were successful when Rādhā sat on the golden throne which defeated the pride of most splendid thrones in the three worlds. Going to that place while singing auspicious songs, which spread waves of beauty by their combination, they bathed Rādhā.

Remembering that Kṛṣṇa would be her husband, Rādhā bathed in the perspiration arising from her *sāttvika-bhāvas.* Her bath performed by materials prepared by the *sakhīs* was for convention's sake. ||28||

[34] They sang an auspicious song:

Victory, O Rādhā, who associates with the moon called Mādhava! On attaining Kṛṣṇa, the pain of separation has been removed. ||29.a||

O Rādhā! This is the splendid *adhivāsa* for marrying Kṛṣṇa. Your condition manifests in his heart. ||29.b||

You are the *mādhavi* creeper of the spring for the eyes of the bee Kṛṣṇa. Among all the women you attract Kṛṣṇa by your *prema.* ||29.c||

Seeing your lotus face, the bee Kṛṣṇa becomes happy. You are the golden line called Lakṣmī on the chest of Kṛṣṇa. ||29.d||

You are proud of your fortune on the chest of Kṛṣṇa. You always think of Kṛṣṇa and you overcome all difficulties by *rasa.* ||29.e||

You give delight to Kṛṣṇa's mind by your beauty. You always play in Vṛndāvana. ||29.f||

[35] Madhukaṇṭha asked, "Lalitā and Viśākhā are among the eight heroines. Were they in Rādhā's house or in

their fathers' houses (preparing for their marriage to Kṛṣṇa)? Please explain."

[36 - 37] Snigdhakaṇṭha said:

Paurṇamāsī has said, "I will accomplish everything in all places at once without obstruction." Now let us return to the topic.

[38] Since she would be embarrassed before the eyes of ordinary *sakhīs*, the *sakhīs* spread a partition and then the most intimate *sakhīs* obtained the happiness of wiping Rādhā's body.

[39] After the bath they dried Rādhā's body but they did not dry her lotus eyes. Because of the manifestation of Kṛṣṇa, her eyes flowed constantly with tears. Saying that she had tears because of oil getting in her eyes, the principal *sakhīs* then dressed her in two pieces of cloth and brought her to the dressing room. ||30||

[40] She then dressed. She gave beauty to all the gold ornaments placed on her hair part, in her locks, in her nose, in her ears, on her arms, on her chest, on her waist and on her feet. She shone with her body made beautiful by the appearance trembling, perspiration, hairs standing on end, being stunned, and tears because of a *sphūrti* of Kṛṣṇa. But out of shyness she tried to hide these symptoms. ||31||

[41] After that, a mirror was offered and Rādhā talked to a *sakhī*:

"Is this the moon?"

"This is an *āratrika* tray."

"What is that moving above?"

“That is the spotless lotus of the moon. Its sprinkles water everywhere, by the direction of the creator. It is in your tray.”

“Is this a mirror?”

“It is the receptacle of your form.”

“What is that in the receptacle?”

“Your face is reflected in the mirror. O Rādhā! Please look for a long time.” ||32||

[42] The *sakhīs* like swans with graceful gait, gentle voices and lotus faces, placed Rādhā, like the queen of swans, in the center and took her to the assembly, giving continuous joy to the married women sitting in low places in the white pavilion previously described. They worshiped her by putting her on a golden throne and waving *cāmaras.*

[43] The bride and groom together sat down facing east and the mothers and in-laws began performing the *adhivāsa* ceremony.

The women applied *tilaka*, the opposite color to their complexions, on the foreheads of the bride and groom while singing songs. Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa, gazing at the other’s *tilaka*, almost merged, and, becoming completely confused, began shaking out of embarrassment. ||33||

Those who had bathed them sprinkled water on the couple using *kuśa* grass and performed the Vedic rites. Later they said, “May the couple have happiness. This is the customary blessing. But we desire much more than that.” ||34||

For the *adhivāsa* ceremony the married women sprinkled fragrant items on the couple. Adhering to the couple, the

powder was suitably called *vāsa-yoga* (red powder and also clothing). ||35||

They decorated the couple's ears with barely sprouts. But not only that, they sprouted the desire of the couple. And thus all actions produced auspiciousness as if sprouting. ||36||

Though their wrists had jeweled bracelets, their wrists became more beautiful with the auspicious threads tied on their wrists. But the cause of auspiciousness was the couple themselves. ||37||

For creating auspiciousness, Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa created external auspiciousness by the items like earth, perfume, and stone. But I think that I will worship the auspiciousness which appeared internally, for which I have desire. For is it not said in grammatical literature that the internal prevails over the external? ||38||

[44] Performing the *adhivāsa*, the married women sprinkled oil and turmeric on the couple's heads using a cloth. Putting the elder women in front, and standing in all directions starting with the east, they sprinkled it around using *kuśa* grass tips. They then sang as follows:

> The couple of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa smeared with oil and turmeric with affection are always constant. ||39.a||
>
> May the new couple protect Gokula and its residents and make them dependent on happiness which spreads out in deep and abundant expanses. ||39.b||
>
> May the couple play, steal our hearts and take away our suffering at all times. May they bestow pleasing splendor and spread glory like the sun. ||39.c||
>
> May the couple spread their sixty-four qualities on Gokula and be kind to them. With joy, may they be

always merciful in letting all people see them with their eyes. ||39.d||

We live happily in your presence. Make everyone complete by showing your sweet forms. May your reign victorious, since you conquer all comparisons to kings. May you remain victorious, astonishing even Ananta. ||39.e||

[45] The couple created auspiciousness by chanting thousands of protective *mantras*, employing yantras and herbs endowed with great powers to destroy all suffering and then, by the order of elders and their mothers, they offered respects to the elders. The elders then loudly blessed the couple. This gave great happiness to all.

“Kṛṣṇa is the husband of Lakṣmī in Vaikuṇṭha and Rādhā is his supreme wife in Gokula since we experience the eternal happiness of his love for her in Gokula.” ||40||

[46] With blaring music and heroic shouts, along with married women, the groom and fortunate bride went to worship Lakṣmī and Nārāyaṇa, the shelter of the Vedas, situated within a temple in the middle of the village on excellent grounds.

[47] Something astonishing happened. When Kṛṣṇa in fine dress entered the temple, Nārāyaṇa merged into Kṛṣṇa’s effulgence and only Lakṣmī was visible. When Rādhā entered the temple, only Nārāyaṇa was visible. When both left the temple to do other ceremonies, Lakṣmī and Nārāyaṇa both appeared there. But people thought this disappearance was caused by the deities’ clothing, for when going to meet a lover secretly, one dresses in white to be invisible in the moonlight, and dresses in black to be invisible on the dark moon night.

[48] Seeing this, Madhumaṅgala said in astonishment, “Look! Look! Something rare has happened because the marriage of Kṛṣṇa with Rādhā is eternal. Rādhā does not merge with Nārāyaṇa and Kṛṣṇa does not merge with Lakṣmī.”[16]

[49] To conclude I will return to the topic: “After the couple worshiped in the temple, they returned home with various songs and music. Externally all was fine, but in their hearts it was otherwise, for Rādhā followed Kṛṣṇa in her heart and Kṛṣṇa followed Rādhā in his heart.” ||41||

[50] After hearing the topics in Nanda’s and Rādhā’s assembly, and seeing everyone return to their houses, the couple whose marriage was being described met in private.

Chapter Thirty-four

Ornamenting Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa

[1] As previously I will narrate the talks of the two assemblies together. Madhukaṇṭha began speaking.

[2] After everyone spent the night absorbed in singing and dancing, the families of the bride and groom realized it was dawn, as if a moment had passed. For the bride and groom a few moments seemed like a thousand *yugas.*

Sometimes the couple, absorbed in meditation, looked on the wedding as witnesses.

Sometimes they became agitated in mind. Then dawn came. They thought, “This is the time for the marriage.” ||1||

With the loud sounds of music in the dawn, the people awoke. Vraja appeared wrapped in attractive pink. Friends of the same age came to Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa, bathed them and performed auspicious acts. ||2||

[3] I will now describe the actions after Rādhā took her bath, which will produce happiness for all.

As the golden glow of moon on the second day turns the Eastern Mountain pink, golden Rādhā with pink cloth gave happiness to all when she made her appearance. ||3||

[4] Her shining limbs were like lightning. Her dark hair was like a rain cloud. Her limbs were like parts of a

golden desire creeper. Her face surrounded by locks of hair was like a lotus attracting bees. Her forehead was like the young moon. Her eyes were like stars. Her brows were like bows. Her nose was like a sesame flower. Her ears were like the sprouts of a golden creeper. Her cheeks were like round golden fruit. Her face was like a round golden leaf with ruby entrance. Her teeth were like strings of pearls freed from a cloud. Her smile was like the fragrance of a vine blossoming with words. Her lips were like red leaves. Her chest was the abode of Lakṣmī, hard to see. Her breasts which were not very visible were like jeweled pots. Her belly was like an *aśvattha* leaf. The line of hair from her belly was like a fine measuring device. Her waist was like the center of an altar made by Viśvakarmā. Her navel was like the deep sacred waters of a holy *tīrtha.* Her cloth of various colors covering her legs and reaching to her feet for good fortune appeared to be two elephant trunks of various colors. The beauty of her toe nails was superior to new shoots with moon beams. Her arms were like soft, cylindrical stems of golden lotuses. Her hands were like lotuses, radiating beauty, both equally beautiful.

[5] Her hair was dressed with curls. Her locks were dusted with *lodhra* powder. She had continuous line of *tilaka* in various colors. Her ear ornaments resembled her eyes which were like blue lotuses. The pearl in her nose was the image of her smile. Her smile was like the pearl necklace dancing on her chest. The beauty arising from the soft rustling of her cloth was like a belt. The ornaments on her neck, arms and other limbs which were causes of the ornaments were like *tilaka.* What more can be said? Her head and other limbs were the best ornaments on her body.

[6] All the amazed *sakhīs* her felt redundant on dressing and became stunned. Quickly they skillfully dressed her.

It seemed that the moon envying her beauty and defeated by it, out of great pain in its heart, developed spots on its surface. ||4||

When silver items, on seeing Rādhā's beauty, became gold, it seemed fitting that all gold in comparison to her beauty turned dull. ||5||

All her limbs and their attendants were like mirrors. It seemed that those limbs doubled the beauty of the ornaments. ||6||

Could the moon with spots delight in the beauty of Rādhā's face whose forehead, cheeks and teeth defeated the beauty of nectar? ||7||

Not only were the *sakhīs* amazed on seeing Rādhā after she was dressed. She became ornamented with the beauty of their amazement. ||8||

Informed with anger mixed with affection by mothers through young girls to hurry up, the *sakhīs* became attentive to their task. ||9||

Her hair, wiped dry with cloth in order to dress it, became beautiful by the absorption of the *sakhīs.* ||10||

Her mass of hair, conquering a mass of dark clouds, when pulled together and curled, surpassed the Yamunā with its black waves by its beauty. ||11||

Though her hair which conquered the clouds had stationary curls as waves, it still conquered the Yamunā with its moving waves. ||12||

Though her locks were perfumed and dried out, devoid of moisture, those locks conquered masses of fresh clouds full of moisture. ||13||

When the *sakhīs* spread out her hair to clean it, the radiance of that black mass of hair made Rādhā more beautiful. ||14||

When her hair was combed and gathered, it seemed that her hair became covered with shame because of being praised. ||15||

As the Yamunā, meeting with Gaṅgā at a confluence *(veṇī),* becomes beautiful, Rādhā's braid (*veṇī*) became beautiful when mixed with flowers. ||16||

Rādhā became beautiful with her flowered braid, resembling the quiver of Cupid. The tip of her braid seemed to conquer Kṛṣṇa. ||17||

As the constellations shine in the dark, expansive sky, similarly the jewels shone amidst her hair. ||18||

As a rainbow shines in the dark clouds, Rādhā's *sindhura* line shone on her auspicious head. ||19||

As the constellations appear full next to the young moon, so the line of pearls shone on her forehead. ||20||

As a golden lotus appears beautiful with two rows of bees, Rādhā's forehead appeared beautiful amidst lines of musk. ||21||

Rādhā's *tilaka* made of *aguru*, sandalwood and musk shone brightly. It seemed to be the best among all her decorations. ||22||

Her eyes were the abode of desire for Kṛṣṇa. The *sakhīs* sowed the seeds of collyrium there in order to attain the fruit of Kṛṣṇa. ||23||

The line of collyrium which covered a third of her eye, recognized as the glance of Cupid, made itself successful as Cupid's arrow. ||24||

The ornaments on her ears were like flowers at the end of a golden creeper. Rādhā's nose, like a parrot's beak, was beautiful with a pearl at its tip. ||25||

Her nose was like a sesame flower with a pearl. Kṛṣṇa took it as Cupid's weapon, the best weapon. ||26||

Rādhā's ears became beautiful with ear ornaments. The bees of her eyes constantly danced about to her cheeks with astonishing desire. ||27||

When the patterns of musk on her cheek shone, the moon, seeing that, took on spots also. ||28||

Like a mango made beautiful with sleeping bees on its surface, Rādhā's chin shone with a spot of *aguru* and sandalwood. ||29||

The delicate *makara* patterns in musk on her cheeks shone brightly. Those patterns were the pleasant replica of Kṛṣṇa's *makara* earrings. ||30||

Let her bracelets on her arms be troops to conquer Kṛṣṇa! But should not her arm bands also incite desire in Kṛṣṇa? ||31||

Rādhā's bracelets set with pearls shone against her dark clothing. They were like bees intoxicated with honey which had fallen from her lotus hands. ||32||

Her arms, conquering fresh desire tree sprouts, with the sparkle of her rings and the soft jingling sound of her bangles, spread radiance everywhere. ||33||

Her rings made her fingernails beautiful. The *sakhīs*, developing greed for Rādhā, became beautiful. ||34||

Her wrists bound with jewels bound up the mind. The rings on her fingers gave joy to Viśākhā's friends. ||35||

The ornaments on her neck should be only for Kṛṣṇa, since the sapphire was the central jewel on the necklace. ||36||

The row of gems shining on her attractive bodice, similar to a cloud, was like a rainbow with its pearls as a flock of flying cranes. ||37||

Her bodice, black with musk, was colored with red *kuṃkuma.* Because of the superiority of the yellow cloth (of Kṛṣṇa), her limbs became yellow. ||38||

The attractive cloth wrapped around Rādhā's waist, endowed with great effulgence, made the women's eyes unsteady. ||39||

The clothing used during the wedding is known as "blissful cloth." Bu*t paṭ* can also be a verb meaning "to spread." This meaning (that which spreads bliss) certainly is appropriate to the situation. ||40||

Rādhā had a jeweled belt tied around her waist. I do not know whether this was for binding the heart of Kṛṣṇa. ||41||

The sounds from Rādhā's ankle bells and foot ornaments, like jingling bells, made her rivals tremble. ||42||

The ankle bells on her lotus feet sounded like the attractive chirping of *khañjana* birds. Hearing that soft sound, Kṛṣṇa thought it conquered all directions with bliss. ||43||

Her toes shone with rows of moon-like toe nails, seeing which, the eyes of all the women, which were like constellations, turned into lotuses. ||44||

By a touch of lac, the soles of her feet looked like red lotuses. On Rādhā's feet, the lac lost its fame. ||45||

On Rādhā, cloth stained red with *kuṃkuma* became an ornament. She was like the moon covered faintly by waterless clouds. ||46||

First her friends saw Rādhā's beauty with their eyes, but then saw her in a mirror. When they became absorbed in this image it became non-different from Rādhā. ||47||

[7] The mothers then brought Rādhā, decorated, beautiful and shy, to a nearby, attractive place. She was like the moon among shining herbs.

[8] Welcomed by *brahmacarīs* chanting *svasti-vacana* and begin blessed by Vaiṣṇava *mantras*, she entered a house endowed with auspiciousness.

Rādhā began to joke with her *sakhīs.* Her mind was agitated with desire for Kṛṣṇa. The day passed as if it were a *kalpa,* while she wondered if the sun would soon set. ||48||

[9] Now Kṛṣṇa's journey to the bride's house will be described. To increase the greed of the listener, his dressing will be described.

Kṛṣṇa was the best among the best of all sapphires. For the wedding, Kṛṣṇa' limbs, thoroughly bathed in beauty, proclaimed his victory. ||49||

[10] One could not decide if all effulgence, all beauty, all fragrance, and all softness resided in his body. Does everything become his ornament or he is the ornament of everything? Does one compare his limbs to an object or compare an object to his limbs. Are his limbs revealed by our senses, or do his limbs reveal our senses? One cannot decide. *Ananvaya* or comparing an object to itself (a mouth-like mouth) is the most suitable type of comparison. In his body, his eye, like his face, surpasses

the lotus and his face, like his eye, surpasses the lotus. His shining teeth, like his soft smile, which is endowed with shining teeth, surpass shining whiteness. In reciprocal comparisons (eg. face like the moon) the object compared is actually not worthy. (Thus one must say “His face conquers the moon.”) Kṛṣṇa’s face makes one remember Rādhā’s face, which is his second face. His eyes make her eyes appear in front of one. This literary ornament called *smaraṇa* makes one forget all other ornaments. In his body, the king of beauty reigns supreme, possessing all glory by its nature.

[11] Attracting the rain shower of all eyes of the universe made the bathing ceremony successful. His shining forehead was like his *tilaka* in the form of a half moon. His fine, round head was an umbrella made of the best of clouds. His restless glance and mild smile were like his *cāmaras*. His face which controls everyone was like the collection of ingredients for conquering all capable kings. His new youth, agitating everyone’s heart, was like his bravery. His brows were like his bow. His attractive nose, like Garuḍa’s beak, was like a special arrow. His decorated ears were like his nooses. His long, muscled arms were like his club. His finger nails were like elephant goads. His throat with three creases, stimulating longing in all people, was his excellent conch. The marks of the wheel on his fingers and toes were like his *cakra.* His massive thighs were like victory pillars. His broad hips were like the provinces in his kingdom. His deep navel was like a pond sprouting lotuses. His attractive belly was the abode of three creases of skin. His astonishing lotus eyes were *cintāmaṇi* gems. His chest endowed with Lakṣmī was like

his palace. His beautiful feet were the abode of joy for all.

[12] Now his ornaments, filled with beauty and attractive like his limbs, placed on his body by his greatest friends, will be described.

As the sun illuminates the peak of Sunrise Mountain, Kṛṣṇa's crown studded with gems which lit the directions shone on his head. ||50||

His glossy dark hair decorated with high-quality, perfect gems radiated beauty. It seemed to be the essence of Rādhā's mind. ||51||

If Jupiter was seen during the dark moon night, perhaps it could compare to the *kuṃkuma tilaka* on Kṛṣṇa's forehead. ||52||

Rādhā's face is the moon. That other moon is simply an imitation. Did Kṛṣṇa, the perfection of Cupid, possess her duplicate in his *tilaka?* ||53||

Kṛṣṇa's brows, imitating his bow, became most astonishing, for even without arrows, those brows conquered Rādhā. ||54||

Did Kṛṣṇa's eyes, greedy for the nectar in Rādhā's moon-like face, become *cakora* birds? For now, not attaining that nectar, those unsteady eyes wander everywhere. ||55||

One ornament on one limb is perfect. But may the earrings be victorious, for they simultaneously decorated his ears and his cheeks! ||56||

He had only his earrings on his ears as ornaments since those earrings reflected his two cheeks. ||57||

His ears became continually joyful with pride in their ornaments because they were sprinkled with the nectar of Rādhā's words. ||58||

Kṛṣṇa always manifests complete *kaiśora* age. The pearl placed by his mother in his nose, now liberated, makes that age ever-fresh. ||59||

Though his snake-like brows turn around in fear, thinking his nose to be Garuḍa's beak, the tip of his nose turns upward in wonder. ||60||

Kṛṣṇa's lips are not contaminated with foreign colors. His lips are tinged with internal color rising from his heart at the time of touching Rādhā's lips. ||61||

His lips have certainly tasted the drops of nectar from Rādhā's lips, for now two crescent moons (made of nectar), his rows of teeth, gleam at the edge of those lips. ||62||

Kṛṣṇa's chin destroys darkness and Rādhā's separation. It thus increases the face's beauty. Therefore poets do not compare his chin to anything else. ||63||

Kṛṣṇa's face was the cause of manifesting the joyful festival of marriage. Like a mirror, that face made everyone seeing it full of joy for the marriage. ||64||

O Kṛṣṇa! Do you consider your image in a mirror equal to your face? Is that why someone is holding a mirror in front of you? ||65||

Kṛṣṇa's worries put the whole world of devotees into anxiety. That is proper for, like Kṛṣṇa, those worries desire to experience the excellence of those devotees. ||66||

It is well known that Kṛṣṇa's heart enjoys through a beautiful line on his chest. The line which shines there knows that it is Rādhā. ||67||

Is the hair curling clockwise on the right side of his chest called Śrīvatsa or is it a sign of his heart's commotion on remembering Rādhā? ||68||

If a new cloud, lightning, and a line of cranes appeared in the sky at once, it could compare to the necklaces on Kṛṣṇa's neck. ||69||

The splendor of his chest is perhaps seen in the sky. In the sky there is the moon, sun and stars and on his chest are diamonds, the Kaustubha gem and pearls. ||70||

As the zodiac glows with the nine planets, so his arm bands glitter with nine gems. ||71||

The bracelets studded with the piles of gems desire to serve Kṛṣṇa. Some being heavy and others light, they act like *guru* and disciple. ||72||

The bracelets were lighter than the armbands, and the rings were lighter than the bracelets. Successively lighter and dependent, they were suitably considered dependent (on Kṛṣṇa). ||73||

Like two sapphire tree branches shining from bottom to top, his two arms shone with arm bands, bracelets, wrist cords and rings. ||74||

The beauty of Kṛṣṇa's arms was desired by the branches of a sapphire tree. But it was impossible for the beauty of those arms to meet Rādhā, who surpassed gold. ||75||

I do not praise his holding up Govardhana with one arm since he could do that simply by remembering about it. But I praise his enthusiasm in doing so. ||76||

Kṛṣṇa's hips are always reflected (*pratibimba*) in the mirror of Rādhā's heart. Thus poets compare his hips to disks (*bimba*). ||77||

His waist ornaments, foot ornaments and anklets spread beauty and sound. They knew that it was the wedding of their shelter, Kṛṣṇa. ||78||

His calves, thighs and hips were successively broader. Attracted to those limbs, Rādhā nourished the successive greatness of those limbs. ||79||

Though his cloth covered his hips, thighs, knees and ankles, his cloth imitated the beauty of those limbs. ||80||

Kṛṣṇa wore an attractive jacket. It was like the delicate sandalwood patterns on his limbs. ||81||

He showed his excellence by tying his waist with a golden cloth sparkling with gems. ||82||

His feet are black on top and red beneath, with astonishing moons for toenails. It seemed that Rādhā's *rasa* (*śyāma* in color) and her *rāga* (red in color) were shining there along with affection. ||83||

When he put on his sewn silk cloth and pure shoes he revealed his beauty. ||84||

He wore a Vaijayantī garland which conquered unlimited beauty in the universe. The garland was glorious like a lofty victory flag. ||85||

The five colors of the garland shone on Kṛṣṇa's body like the five *rasas śānta* (white), *dāsya* (mulitcolored), *sakhya* (orange), *vātsalya* (crimson) and *madhurya (śyāma).* ***[17]*** ||86||

With his splendid upper cloth and the golden line on his chest he defeated all other auspicious objects. His inner

beauty shining through his upper cloth was extraordinary. ||87||

As Rādhā's desires appears splendid when veiled by various emotions such as shyness, Kṛṣṇa wearing yellow cloth appeared splendid when covered by various other clothes. ||88||

Twirling a play lotus on the pretext of smelling its fragrance, Kṛṣṇa covered his face with the lotus out of shyness. ||89||

Seeing the beauty of his head, the nap of his neck, his back, hips, ankles and feet from the back, one could not withdraw one's eyes to the front. ||90||

Let Kṛṣṇa be dressed up. It is attractive to heaven and earth. But his flute, stick and peacock feather are dearer than our life. ||91||

Though he was seated nicely, fragrant with musk, camphor and *aguru,* Kṛṣṇa conquered the directions with the fragrance emanating from his body. upto here ||92||

Rādhā's fragrance, mixing with Kṛṣṇa's fragrance, made the whole world joyful. ||93||

Rādhā took the poetic words concerning Kṛṣṇa's limbs– full of all good qualities, with attractive colors enhanced by jingling ornaments (described using attractive words, with literary ornaments and suggestion)–as if they were seen (in a drama). ||94||

[13] The narrator concluded: "Not only did the ornaments attain beauty when placed on the limbs of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa but they gave pleasure to the minds and voices of devotees." ||95||

[14] Hearing the words of the reciters, Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa could not think of sleeping. But then, developing desire, they retired to their private quarters together. ||96||

Chapter Thirty-five

Marriage of Rādhā and Mādhava

[1] As before the narrations at the two assemblies will be spoken together. Snigdhakaṇṭha began speaking.

[2] Though Ananta cannot completely describe how Kṛṣṇa was dressed, when his dressing was completed in the morning, the *brāhmaṇas* and his father performed the Nāndīmukha ceremony and other rites. Then friends of the mother and father and sisters such as Kātyāyanī gathered. The marriage procession of the assembled auspicious elements will now be described.

At the moment decided by the astrologers, with music sounding in heaven and on earth, Kṛṣṇa spread the joy of the auspicious procession, while being full of joy and giving joy to all. ||1||

In the procession Kṛṣṇa spread himself in all directions through his beauty. The sound of drums joined with the loud instrumental music while jeweled horses, elephants and chariots, pressing upon each other, jingled with their all their bells. The mixture of music created bewilderment in heaven and on earth. ||2||

Please understand that there was nothing except the mixture of musical instruments and chanting of praises in heaven and on earth. The flowers thrown by the people mixed with the flowers showered from heaven. One could not tell them apart. ||3||

[3] In the procession Vaijayantī garlands were like fluttering flags. Experts in heavenly music played the music. The dancers were skillful in dancing and singing. Priests walked in front. Unlimited carts moved in front with the elders. His friends walked on either side. Servants walked while holding *cāmaras*. Balarāma and Śrīdāma were joyful along with Uddhava. The horses Saibya, Sugrīva, Meghapuṣpa and Valāhakā were yoked to the chariot. The camphor water of Kṛṣṇa's beauty, spreading everywhere, was intensely attractive. Dāruka was on the chariot with Kṛṣṇa. Persons holding the ingredients accompanied them. Various groups of craftsmen followed along. Jesters appeared, creating comedy. The famous *vandis* praised the groom. Above, *devatās* headed by Brahmā and Śiva became absorbed in the festival. In the sky persons engaged according to qualification and *devatās* showered flowers.

When Kṛṣṇa with his driver Dāruka ascended to his chariot yoked with his four horses his effulgence eclipsed the *devatās* airplanes. ||4||

The sky is called the path of the *devatās.* The people of Vraja directly saw what that meant, since at that time the sky was filled with *devatās.* ||5||

As the lotus blossoms by the sun's rays, the lotus faces of the *devatā* women blossomed in the thousands of rays emanating from Kṛṣṇa on his wedding day. ||6||

Some of the *devatā* women showered flowers but became stunned by his beauty. But the showering was completed by flowers which fell from their hair. ||7||

Some of the women sang auspicious songs but their voices choked in bliss. But because of the affection in their voices, people still became blissful. ||8||

All the *devatā* women, seeing the groom's beauty, became young girls. Their husbands also became overtaken with that emotion. ||9||

The husbands pulled back the women who fell from their airplanes because of fainting from Kṛṣṇa's beauty and Kṛṣṇa's beauty attracted the husbands also. ||10||

Other *devatā* women, on seeing Kṛṣṇa, were embraced by their husbands to save them from falling, but the women's limbs, because of hairs standing on end, inflicted injury on their husbands. ||11||

When some women saw the beauty of Kṛṣṇa, their belts slipped off. Though their husbands kept tying their belts again and again, the women were not even aware of what was happening. ||12||

The arrow of Kṛṣṇa's glance entered the eyes of the *devatās'* wives and entered their minds. When their husbands saw that, those glances, out of shame, did not leave their wives' minds. ||13||

Some women embraced his moon-like face with their eyes and felt fortunate. Some embraced his lotus eyes with their eyes and some embraced his chest with their eyes. Some embraced his arms, like sapphire pillars, with their eyes. But they did not know that Kṛṣṇa had already offered all his limbs to Rādhā. ||14||

[4] Ananta could not describe all these qualities of Kṛṣṇa. Madhumaṅgala glanced upwards many times and began jumping.

[5] Everyone asked while laughing, "O *brāhmaṇa* boy! What are you trying to do?"

[6] Madhumaṅgala said, "Lazy people! You are very simple-minded. Do you not see? Do you not see? I know

that all these women are eager to control my friend. I am preventing them.”

The relatives of the groom laughed and talked when Madhumaṅgala uttered this out of fear and boldness. ||15||

[7] Taking the opportunity of the music, laughter and loud talk, bringing bliss to the chambers of in-laws, Kṛṣṇa entered the nearby house with longing in his lotus eyes.

When the moon approaches the sun (*bhānu*), it becomes thin. When Kṛṣṇa approached Vṛṣabhānu’s house, he became fuller at every moment. ||16||

Hearing the blare of music at the groom’s coming, Rādhā began trembling and made her *sakhīs* suffer. ||17||

Ah! What bliss! The Kṛṣṇa cloud was coming closer and closer. Rādhā became full of expectation like a *cātaka* bird. ||18||

[8] Bringing consecrated fires, performing sacrifices and gathering articles for the Pitṛs, Vṛṣabhānu performed the necessary Nāndīmukha worship. Then the guests entered along with colorful music, leaving their own houses.

[9] The two groups met with great respect, like mixing two oceans together. High in his chariot Kṛṣṇa surpassed the laws of respect concerning younger and older.

Thousands of men and women performed worship with excellent jewels. Using their arms, they waved the plates of jewels in circles around his limbs with tears in their eyes. ||19||

Seeing Kṛṣṇa, Vṛṣabhānu’s relatives praised Rādhā’s great fortune. The hairs of all their limbs stood on end in

prema. If Rādhā did not marry him, there would not be such unlimited splendor! ||20||

[10] The *devatā* women who did not know Kṛṣṇa spoke as follows:

“His face is like a lotus, increasing beautiful at every moment. Two stars glitter and tremble in his eyes. His body is like a mass of clouds. It is quivering in bliss, above, below, in all directions. What is this? Ah! What is it?” ||21||

[11] Those who knew Kṛṣṇa spoke:

“Brahmā’s wife is Sāvitrī, Śiva’s wife is Durgā, Viṣṇu’s wife is Lakṣmī and Kṛṣṇa’s wife is Rukmiṇī. These marriages give great happiness to the world. But if Kṛṣṇa were not to marry those women by whose beauty his own astonishing beauty permeated the *rāsa* dance, with the Rādhā as the chief, what use are those marriages?” ||22||

[12] When Kṛṣṇa appearing on the path surrounded by his friends, looking like the gem-studded earth, spread with various cloths, Vṛṣabhānu came to meet him with his joyful attendants.

Before Kṛṣṇa had gone to Mathurā, Vṛṣabhānu had seen him hundreds of times and was touched with affection for him for a long time. But when Vṛṣabhānu saw him now, he appeared to be new. He stood motionless like a picture in astonishment. ||23||

[13] Gazing at him for a moment, Vṛṣabhānu then showed him auspicious items and performed *āratrika* to him. Sprinkling flowers on him, he offered pleasant blessings. Exchanging embraces with Nanda with tearful eyes, he placed Kṛṣṇa in front and brought him into the

clean house decked with wealth. At that moment it seemed that the moon had appeared among the stars, like a sapphire pot arriving in an auspicious house, or like the *devatā* of auspiciousness personally making an appearance.

With his dark rays, the Kṛṣṇa moon illuminated the dais, which was studded with gems, decorated with blossoming banana stalks at its four corners, with a canopy of pearls, festoons over its gate, with rows of lamps illuminating the pots. ||24||

In front were Nanda and the elders and at the sides were friends like Balarāma standing in order and Uddhava. Dāruka and assistants stood behind Kṛṣṇa. ||25||

[14] While birds with raised heads began singing sweetly on the rooftops, some women on the balconies were silent, some shouted, “Victory” and some sang songs with joking and sharp words:

> Look friend, to whom does Kṛṣṇa belong (Is he Vasudeva’s or Nanda’s child)?
>
> Thinking about it, I cannot come to any conclusion.
>
> Though they were very old, Nanda and Yaśodā obtained him as their son. They surpass all young men and women by their many pious acts.
>
> He who is the crest jewel of cleverness and whose parents are famous for their simplicity throughout the universe controls the hearts of all people in the universe.
>
> He for whom all have affection and whom all take him as their son does not regard only Nanda and Yaśodā as his parents, but regards all the elders in this way.

Nanda’s dynasty has never been like this in qualities and beauty. Kṛṣṇa displays the highest qualities and beauty at all times.

With all his qualities, he, being wealthy and respectable, gives everything away. With his qualities and wealth, going through Vraja, he woos Rādhā, daughter of Vṛṣabhānu. ||26||

[15] Madhumaṅgala said, “These servant girls are abusing my prince. I will have Kṛṣṇa make them his servants to punish them and will make Rādhā his wife.”

[16 - 17] The girls, going to Nanda, said, “Catch that *brāhmaṇa* boy! Catch him!”

Madhumaṅgala said, “Why are you fleeing from us now? If I had gone with my friend Kṛṣṇa here and there, making war with kings with his assistance, we would be greatly delayed in meeting the people of Vraja. O servants! Immediately look at us, cause of astonishment for you!”

[18] When loud laugher arose, everyone became absorbed in another astonishing thing.

Vṛṣabhānu offered Kṛṣṇa two pieces of fine cloth, a sacred thread, and shoes. Kṛṣṇa accepted them without shame, thinking that it was not improper to accept them. ||27||

As guests understand that after being offered a seat and other items, a meal will follow, Kṛṣṇa, when offered the seat by his father-in-law, understood that he would attain Rādhā. ||28||

When Vṛṣabhānu chanted *mantras* and gave a cow to the groom, Kṛṣṇa through the *mantra* said in bliss, “Let the

cow have grass with water. It should not be otherwise.” ||29||

Overjoyed on obtaining what he desired from Vṛṣabhānu, Kṛṣṇa forgot what to do. He did his duties while trembling, like a wooden puppet in his friends’ hands. ||30||

Vṛṣabhānu worshiped the principal guests with fine items. There was nothing to compare to the constant bliss and joking which arose at this wedding. ||31||

[19] Shaking his head, Madhumaṅgala addressed the assembly: “Kṛṣṇa’s marriage brings me great auspiciousness because until now everyone called me a joker, but now it looks like everyone is just like me, laughing so much.”

[20] When eight auspicious prayers were recited and the auspicious twilight arrived, feeling great happiness. Vṛṣabhānu brought the groom, the form of all auspiciousness, into the inner chamber along with the priests and close friends.

[21] When the excellent groom arrived, all the women with jingling ornaments became blissful.

With eyes anxious to see him, the colorful group of women suddenly approached with respect and joking curiosity, seeing him as an astonishing son-in-law. In a different area, Rādhā’s mother, along with women of similar age, performed worship of Kṛṣṇa’s limbs with jewels, by first touching their heads. ||32||

[22] Seating Kṛṣṇa on an excellent seat as the twilight moment arrived, women with sons had Rādhā circumambulate Kṛṣṇa seven times and sit in front of him.

Seeing the bride on her high seat, the groom's guests lifted him up higher on his seat as a joke and became blissful. ||33||

[23] Sitting facing each other, the couple, radiant like condensed sapphire and condensed gold, could not bear the delay. As the fragrances of a blue lotus and a gold lotus mixed, the happiness made their bodies limp. The attendees became stunned.

Though the couple could not look at each other directly in the presence of elders, taking power from their hearts, with closed eyes they perceived each other clearly. ||34||

Though, with their eyes closed, they had great desire in their hearts to see each other, they also made attempts to see each other with open eyes, which moved about like fish. ||35||

[24] The astrologers rang bells to announce the proper moment for the wedding. The well-wishers in the assembly understood that the evening, bestowing happiness, would accomplish the wedding which would give happiness to all. The priests who were well-versed in the process and read the *mantras* clearly made Vṛṣabhānu give away the bride.

Vṛṣabhānu, with tears in his eyes, with his trembling, damp hand took Rādhā's trembling hand and offered it to Kṛṣṇa's trembling hand. Continual music which greeted the whole universe announced to heaven and earth the abundance of new auspiciousness. ||36||

[25] Giving cows:

When the *mantra*, "Who has given her?" was uttered, no one knew the answer at the betrothal. But the groom

knew that the giver and receiver of the bride was Cupid —whose name was recited later in the *mantra*. ||37||

[26] With gravity they heard the words, “Let them see each other at this auspicious moment.” They glanced at each other and then closed their eyes as if to keep the happiness within.

From this day when their meeting was accomplished, Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa did not glance at anything else. ||38||

When the priests instructed them to meditate on their *devatā*, they knew only one object in their minds. ||39||

[27] As the women sang songs, the friends brought the bride close to the groom.

[28] Though the couple’s *kaiśora* age revived when he returned to Vraja, at the wedding they became *kaumāra* age out of shyness.

[29] The song:

> Since Kṛṣṇa has manifested the wedding with Rādhā, everything has now become successful.
>
> By this marriage, the great dynasty of her mother and father, as well as the dynasties, wealth, activities, and friends of all people have become successful.
>
> All sentiments, all unions, all auspicious meetings after separation, and all experiences of continual happiness have become successful.
>
> O friend! How can we sing of the happiness of her father-in-law and mother-in-law? All the items in this wedding are their joyous ornaments. ||40||

[30] When the couple united, others thought of them as a different object.

Though Rādhā is gold and Kṛṣṇa is sapphire black, together they are like the *vaidūrya* gem with their two complexions mixed. ||41||

Their supreme beauty stunned all people such that they could not carry out the rest of the wedding procedures. ||42||

When the priests instructed them, they tied their cloths together and when it was time to circumambulate the fire, they stood there with hairs standing on end. ||43||

They walked around the fire clockwise. The eyes of all others, absorbed in the couple, also walked around the fire. ||44||

The couple could not walk far from the fire because of the crowds. The touch and boldness of the crowds was prevalent. Thus they could not walk perfectly around the fire. ||45||

When, on the order of the priests, Rādhā, with wide eyes, offered popped rice in the fire, given by her brother, her lotus hand became shy, flickering like lightning. ||46||

After offering popped rice, the groom held her hands behind her back, and then touched her shoulders and chest as instructed. We could not say, “Why is that done?” Out of embarrassment, was Kṛṣṇa able to do the actions without being prompted? ||47||

The groom then put the bride’s right food on a stone using his right hand. This is prescribed in the Vedas. hough it was well known that he previously held Govardhana Mountain without effort, amazingly, he had no power to lift her foot with his shaking hand. ||48||

The priest said, “The fire is the witness of your marriage.” But he did not know that their marriage was eternal. ||49||

To complete “seven steps” they took seven steps. Did they not also step beyond the seven planets? ||50||

[31] After the seven steps were completed, they performed the ceremony of looking at the pole star for happiness. When the husband asks the wife if she sees the pole star in joy, she should say “yes” or “no.” That custom produced a remarkable situation.

When he asked if she saw the pole star (*dhruva*), shy to concentrate on the star, she said softly, without telling a lie, that she did, while taking him as the most constant (*dhruva*). ||51||

With the groom in front and bride behind, covered with cloth, they offered respects to Nanda. With his permission they worshiped the members present since this is prescribed by the sages. ||52||

Nanda then gave his son blessings and worshiped him. He did the same to the bride. Looking at the couple’s faces according to the rules, he gave gifts to Vṛṣabhānu’s priests. ||53||

[32] The couple was made to sit on a golden throne on a square dais. This was a time for the women folk. The men went outside. The in-law women approached the couple to throw rice. Then some women performed some rites with joking and joy, without knowing their significance.

Though his eyes, ears, nostrils and heart were pervaded by Rādhā, the women desired to have Kṛṣṇa take control

of Rādhā. Those who knew the truth laughed at these women. ||54||

He became embarrassed in placing vermilion on the part in her hair according to custom, since his hand trembled from touching her before women in the group. ||55||

[33] All the other activities including feasting were completed with joy. Kṛṣṇa was requested to retire to bed but, embarrassed to do so, he went to his father, relatives, Balarāma and Uddhava, who had gathered together outside to eat. He sat among his friends joking with Madhumaṅgala.

Inside, on instructions of the elders, dear friends took Rādhā to a solitary room. Rādhā became angry at their joking and spent the night there, her intelligence stolen by Kṛṣṇa. ||56||

[34] Madhumaṅgala joked.

When Madhumaṅgala made a show of a mean face at the feast everyone laughed heartily. But when he then showed a smiling face they laughed even harder. ||57||

Madhumaṅgala showed a disgusting face on being served his share of spiced vegetables but showed a happy face on being served the sweets. This made the other eaters laugh. ||58||

[35] When eating was finished, Kṛṣṇa stayed awake the whole night with friends, dancing and joking. Inside the house there was similar bliss.

[36] When the wondrous night passed and the auspicious dawn arrived, Nanda with his group expressed to his affectionate relatives his desire to leave for his house. He obtained permission from the astrologers to assist him in going. Vṛṣabhānu gathered articles from the whole world

and offered the articles to Parjanya's descendant Nanda, just as the sun in Taurus sign takes up water and the showers it. How to count the articles which were like the joyous rains of the monsoon season? The items gave happiness to the eye and ear.

Nanda's wealth doubled at the wedding. Though he was happy in receiving this from Vṛṣabhānu, by receiving the bride of his son, the daughter of Vṛṣabhānu's daughter, what was the use of any other wealth? He forgot everything else including the whole universe. ||59||

People knew that whatever Vṛṣabhānu and his wife spoke with broken words and tearful eyes was caused by giving away their daughter. But people did not know of the grief caused when they had previously given her to Abhimanyu. ||60||

[37] Righteous Vṛṣabhānu brought Kṛṣṇa into his house, and decorating him with clothing and other items, fed him sweets, and taking him by the hand spoke with Kīrtidā. Addressing him as his son, he spoke with tears in his eyes, "From her childhood my Rādhā has acted lifeless. Do not become angry at my fault."

[38] There is a verse in this regard:

"O Kṛṣṇa! What bliss! O groom! My daughter is attached only to you. I offer her to you. But forgive my offense to my daughter. O child! Though she was intelligent I saw that she acted dull from infancy. We did not know the reason at all." ||61||

[39] With his heart satisfied, he satisfied Kṛṣṇa by proper treatment and again offered his daughter, and then even his son Śrīdāma. Then with a painful heart he let the bride and groom leave.

[40] Offering his in-laws respect, Kṛṣṇa went outside. With her head covered by a cloth, the couple embraced Rādhā together, bathing her in their tears. Praising her they spoke with tears in their eyes:

“O daughter! Please you husband with full attention. Please your mothers-in-law by dedicated service suitable to a bride. Please your father-in-law by shyness and good character. Satisfy others by your wealth of good qualities. What else can we instruct you? Knowing that Kṛṣṇa was your husband, you spit upon Abhimanyu who mistakenly thought he was your husband.” ||62||

Her grandmother and grandfather, uncles and sisters individually embraced her with tears and then sang auspicious songs. They spoke, but their naturally attractive voices became choked up. Looking at her tearful face, they then sent her to Kṛṣṇa. ||63||

[41] He placed her in a cart spread with cloth which moved at a pleasant pace and collected all items sent by the in-laws. Parties from both sides gathered together, filling the path. Music more remarkable than the previous music arose. As Kṛṣṇa returned home, in heaven Indra held a festival. Thus there was no difference between heaven and earth.

Seeing the uncountable *brāhmaṇa* chanters, the *sūtas, māgadhas* and dancers outside his palace, Nanda distributed gifts to the extent that the recipients could not carry them. What to say? Even into the night they could not take away all the gifts. ||64||

While hearing the attractive music accompanying the bride and groom, Yaśodā lost her energy from being stunned. But by great influx of mercy, she was able to perform her auspicious actions. ||65||

Yaśodā was like the full moon and Rohiṇī was like the moon on the next day. Their combination gave joy to Vraja. ||66||

[42] The path to the palace was covered with attractive cloth. The banana and betel trees lining the path were bearing fruit. At the bases of the trees were auspicious pots filled with water, with leaves in their mouths. Around the pots were blazing lamps. Bees were singing auspicious songs to the trees and pots. Confused because of agitation at the singing, other bees flocked around the fragrant ghee lamps nearby. They looked as if they were removing streaks of soot from the lamps when they flew away again. The tree lamps, with their blackened poles appeared to be men carrying flags. Their hearts greedy for the beauty of the palace, the *devatās* showered flowers.

At that place people heard various types of music in succession from various instruments. As the tumultuous sound increased, Kṛṣṇa came to the door with joy. Just as Rādhā came to the door, her intimate *sakhīs* worshiping Kṛṣṇa along with others arrived at the entrance along with Kṛṣṇa. ||67||

When Kṛṣṇa arrived the *devatās* played music, showered flowers and sang. Repeatedly Kṛṣṇa on some pretext looked at the spot where the *gopīs* were standing and entered among them. In this condition he arrived at his house. ||68||

Sitting in the covered cow cart, remembering Kṛṣṇa’s touch while walking around the fire, Rādhā, defeating Kṛṣṇa’s effulgence with her own, arrived at Nanda’s house. ||69||

Just as the moon rises over the Eastern Mountain and enters the sky so Rādhā, clothed in splendid robes, left her father's house and came to Nanda's house. ||70||

[43] The other *gopīs* who had accepted Kṛṣṇa as their husband followed behind. People gazed with hairs standing on end.

They all took Kṛṣṇa as their husband and married him. Covered with marriage cloth, they all became stunned. He made them all joyful with bliss. ||71||

[44] Madhumaṅgala, happy on the auspicious occasion, left everyone else behind and went in front. Hearing the attractive thumping of the drums he began to dance.

[45] Putting Kṛṣṇa in front, with people crowding into the entrance of the inner rooms, the couple dismounted from the cart without being crushed and became the object of greed. They possessed the beauty of a rain cloud in front of a rainbow.

[46] Rādhā and Candrāvalī, whose beauty lit all the paths, were on Kṛṣṇa's left and right side. His effulgence mixed with theirs. The people in the house saw the power of the two *gopīs* who were seen to have numerous expansions as brides in the form of the other *gopīs.* Each of these women, taking Kṛṣṇa alone as their husband, saw him next to themselves. He appeared in that role.

Yaśodā came to worship the various couples with *āratrika.* In performing the *āratrika* the couples appeared in her heart, and she became stunned. Breast milk moistened her cloth. ||72||

Though she did the *āratrika,* she could not use all her limbs. Her assistants, taking her trembling hand, completed the *āratrika.* ||73||

[47] Since Rohiṇī became similarly bewildered by affection, she could not assist the *āratrika.* The *āratrika* was finally completed.

To complete the *āratrika* Kṛṣṇa held the jewels above the heads of his beloved *gopīs* and then lowered them. It seemed that the countless stars (the jewels), seeing countless moons (their faces), began dancing. ||74||

[48] The women sang:

> Ah! See the greatness of Nanda! At the happy marriage of his son, he has gathered countless beautiful Lakṣmīs.
>
> Seeing Rādhā, the source of all happiness, they have plucked the best of whatever can arise. Having attained all unlimited fruits, they attain newness of beauty at every moment.
>
> Nanda has suitably made this spotless form of his son, taking him from Dvārakā. The king of his family, stolen by Vasudeva, has been stolen suitably by the strong force of love along with Balarāma.
>
> He cannot control his weighty heart which bewilders the three worlds.
>
> It seems that the supreme happiness of marriage dwells in his heart. ||75||
>
> When the *gopīs* came to Nanda's house, respected by the women and satisfied with marriage, they established a wealth of power that was not present when Kṛṣṇa was born. ||76||

[49] Gazing constantly at the moon-like faces of the *gopīs,* Yaśodā and her sisters-in-law, worshiping them with *āratrika*, began to shed tears. Feeling shy, Kṛṣṇa, dressed in fine clothing, offered respects to free himself

and then went to where Nanda was staying. There was no limit on the care that Yaśodā showered on Rādhā among all the new wives.

[50] Care shown for Rādhā:

Yaśodā looked at her face, put her nose to her head and embraced her. As grass becomes tender near a river, Yaśodā became tender with affection near Rādhā. All people nearby also melted with affection. ||77||

[51] As the moon on rising surpasses gold because of its whiteness and shines brightly in the company of the stars, so Kṛṣṇa, the object of greed because of his perfect beauty, surpassed gold with his yellow cloth and shone brightly with his pearl necklaces. As the ocean becomes turbulent with waves when the moon rises, the unlimited expanse of people became agitated with waves of love.

To please Kṛṣṇa, all the elements of blessings, dancing, praising, recitation of the Veda, the wealth of musical skill, and the music spreading through heaven and earth united as one, just as all scriptures unanimously point to one Lord. ||78||

[52] Nanda sat down with his son and saw in all directions countless respectable people. Giving them rare gifts, he had his friends enter his house and fed them food with various tastes.

The wise could not count the number of foods offered even if they counted for a day of Brahmā. ||79||

[53] When two days, astonishing as a heavenly bird, had passed in happiness, righteous Nanda increased the wedding party to a hundred trillion people, extending the celebration to three-and-half days. All the women, proud

of marrying Kṛṣṇa, became happy with the sacrifice on the fourth day.[18]

Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa, on the fourth day after accepting the bride's hand, bathed, dressed, applied unguents and put on garlands and many jewels. Many times *nirmañchana**[19]*** was performed and one time *āratrika* was performed. When I meditate on these activities my heart becomes content. I see no other happiness. ||80||

According to the custom, the couple ate together and played dice, one defeating the other. These actions were not astonishing because in eating and gambling, depending on natural strength, both of them excelled. ||81||

There is a game called *kaṅkana-mocana* in which the bride and groom compete to untie a knot. Rādhā, being shy was slower. Though she was agile, Kṛṣṇa untied the knot first. ||82||

Seeing all the inconceivable items that Brahmā and Śiva had collected to offer Kṛṣṇa at his wedding, people of Vraja praised the items in shame (since they could not offer such items). ||83||

[54] Receiving an invitation on the fifth day, Kṛṣṇa along with his wives and friends went to his fathers-in-law houses as previously. After a big feast, Kṛṣṇa returned home, experiencing a second welcome festival filled with playful bliss, while his wives gave crooked glances from eyes contracted because of shyness in joking.

[55] All the women whose bodies had been assembled by Yogamāyā, who were duplicates of the *gopīs* like Rādhā–who were controlled by *prema,* and were always close by, having been invited by the women of the assembly at the beginning of the festival–became objects of affection

for Kṛṣṇa, Rādhā, the *gopīs* and the *gopīs'* mothers and fathers, for these women had previously protected the *gopīs'* self-respect. Therefore everyone showed them affection as friends.

[56] After his wedding at a suitable time, Kṛṣṇa experienced another pleasure, because Śrīdāma and others who had previously remained at *kaumāra* age by their own will (and therefore did not get married while Kṛṣṇa was gone) then got married.

[57] Snigdhakaṇṭha concluded:

Seeing the marriage of Kṛṣṇa with the *gopīs* who rose from the ocean of Vraja like Lakṣmīs, Sarasvatī cannot make suitable praise. If no poets can make suitable praise, I must be ashamed, since my descriptions are unworthy. ||84||

Since time assisted the *gopīs* in marrying Kṛṣṇa, that Vaiśākha month is glorious. It is seen that the month (also called Mādhava) is also known as Rādhā. ||85||

Victory to the pure waxing phase of Vaiśākha month, giving the happiness of marriage! It was a match maker with an unimpeded heart for producing the *prema* of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa. ||86||

[58] Madhukaṇṭha said with regret, "Oh! If there is always the greatest happiness spread everywhere, my mind has become confused, since going to Dvārakā would be completely prevented by the bliss of Yamunā pastimes like the *rāsa* dance. (How could Kṛṣṇa go at all?)"

[59] Snigdhakaṇṭha said, "O brother! Do not worry a bit. Viśākhā, who is by good fortune the daughter of a

cowherd in Vraja, is present in another form (daughter of the sun, like Yamunā) in Dvārakā.”

[60] Madhukaṇṭha said, “Why is Viśākhā golden here, but as Yamunā (Kālindī) is black in Dvārakā?”[20]

[61] Snigdhakaṇṭha said with a smile, “Viśākhā who dresses Rādhā and is devoted to her, takes on the different form like a locust caught by a wasp (which becomes a wasp by meditation in fear), just as in every *kalpa* she becomes the star named Viśākhā.”

[62] Again the conclusion:

In this work, to produce auspiciousness in poetics, the marriage of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa described produces great *rāga.* That *anurāga* in marriage is the abode of association without obstacles. Giving that up marriage as one’s shelter, one’s life becomes useless. ||87||

[63] This is a general statement. The first part of the verse may be altered to include all the *gopīs* instead of just Rādhā.

The exalted marriages that took place between the women of Vraja and Kṛṣṇa are not widely publicized by poets, but continued to produce great *rāga in* them.

Hearing the story of their marriage which happened long ago, Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa, as if seeing that marriage night directly, played in their abode. ||88||

Chapter Thirty-six

Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa United

[1] In the evening, the talk in the assembly of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa was different. Madhukaṇṭha and Snigdhakaṇṭha began speaking in turn.

At this time, there had not been a meeting between Kṛṣṇa and the *gopīs.*

Though hundreds of obstacles had been removed, shyness of cultured men and women to meet made them stunned, overshadowing all their efforts. ||1||

Before he left for Mathurā, Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa, understanding that no one would discover their illicit love, engaged in pastimes. Now that they were married, and it was understood that they could engage in pastimes, but they were shy. Mutually they showed indifference, though they were attached in their minds. ||2||

[2] Yaśodā prepared the beds for all the wives. Hearing that her son was not interested, her mind became miserable with shame and compassion. In this situation, Kṛṣṇa and the *gopīs'* minds were inundated with unlimited grief.

[3] The mind of one wife is described:

"It is a lie for people to say to us that Kṛṣṇa is an illicit lover (*upapati*) in this marriage, for acting shyly is not a lie. How will we unite with him?" ||3||

All the *gopīs* became stagnated. They tried to rid themselves of shyness but the shyness increased. People desired to see some conjugal pastimes since there should be some opportunity now.

[4] When fear disappeared shyness took over. Just as women experience pain because of separation, shyness, knowing our weak point, attacks us. ||4||

[5] Kṛṣṇa's pain is described:

"They grieved in separation, and now they are married to me. But they do not associate with me. They do not come because of rascal shyness. Which mothers in the universe know about this? Will they give up their lives? What should I do? I am caught in the whirlpool between two waves. I cannot at all maintain steadiness. Praying for me as their husband, they could not give up pain without marriage to me. Rādhā in pain of separation will die." ||5 - 6||

[6] Following the advice of Paurṇamāsī, Vṛndā spoke to Kṛṣṇa in private to bring him under control by her words: "Oh! Before marriage you did activities which transgressed *dharma* and local custom. But now why do you not abide by *dharma* and local custom?"

[7] Concealing his thoughts, Kṛṣṇa said, "What do you mean?"

[8] Vṛndā said, "Though you know, why do you act as if ignorant? You make me die by making life intolerable for your wives!"

[9] Kṛṣṇa said, "What happiness do they not have?"

[10] Vṛndā said, "You say they enjoy (*abhāji*) but this actually means their enjoyment is broken (*abhāji* from the root *bhañj*)."

[11] Kṛṣṇa said, “I pulled them out of an intolerable situation. Why are they not happy now?”

[12] Vṛndā said in affectionate anger:

They are not suffering or blissful on their own. O Kṛṣṇa! Separation from you makes them suffer in the ocean’s *bāḍava* fire and union with you gives them joy in the ocean of bliss. ||7||

[13] Bhadrā is stunned in separation. Śyāmalā is trembling with hairs standing on end. Śaibyā is weeping. Padmā’s voice is choked. Famous Candrāvalī is stunned. Viśākhā is perspiring. Lalitā has become pale. Rādhā has fainted. The eight *gopīs* are afflicted by eight *sāttvika-bhāvas.* You, the lord of their lives, should save them. ||8||

[14] He sat there in a lonely spot talking with intense Vṛndā but he could not think what to do. At that moment Paurṇamāsī appeared with Madhumaṅgala. Giving Kṛṣṇa blessings she said to Vṛndā, “I have been looking for you and have found you having an auspicious meeting with Kṛṣṇa.”

[15] Vṛndā said in bliss, “Please give me an order.”

[16] Paurṇamāsī said, “That will be accomplished after informing Kṛṣṇa. I will say it in front of him now. I have gone to give that news to Yaśodā. Previously I made this amazing decision—I would worship Lakṣmī and Nārāyaṇa after completing the marriage of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa. This will be accomplished by a devoted couple doing the worship.”

[17] Vṛndā said, “Then what happened?”

[18] Paurṇamāsī said, “To support my words Yaśodā with a happy heart asked ‘Have you decided which couple

should to the worship?’ Laughing, I told a secret: anything arising from happiness of the couple has absolute value but not otherwise.”

[19] Vṛndā said, “Then what happened?”

[20] Paurṇamāsī said, “Hearing this Yaśodā spoke pleasantly: ‘Where will this worship take place, how long will it last?’ I said that it would last one month in a lonely forest.”

[21] Vṛndā said, “Did Yaśodā agree?”

[22] Paurṇamāsī said with a smile, “Is Yaśodā incapable like old Jaṭīlā? She desires as I desire.”

[23] Vṛndā said, “Please tell me about the worship in detail.”

[24] Paurṇamāsī said, “In the early morning on the order of Yaśodā and Nanda, Kṛṣṇa will meet with Rādhā and the other *gopīs.* I will take them to the forest and perform worship for many days. I will worship at the *sandhyā* and at night for two full fortnights. Staying in a lonely place I will complete the worship.” ||9||

[25] Vṛndā said in bliss, “What do you order me now?”

[26] Paurṇamāsī said, “Why do you ask me to order you? Just tell Kṛṣṇa so that the decision in the minds of his unalloyed devotees is not destroyed.”

[27] Kṛṣṇa said with a smile, “Do as you wish in such a way that I am not embarrassed.”

[28] Paurṇamāsī said, “O lotus-eyed Kṛṣṇa! Shyness indeed has bad eyes. How will indulgence in it produce bliss? I am considering how you can overcome that shyness. Do not needlessly lament.”

[29] Kṛṣṇa said, “I should just give up everything and remain shyly in some place all alone.”

[30] Paurṇamāsī said, “You should ask Yaśodā without shyness to worship Lakṣmī and Nārāyaṇa. As you did previously, you should herd the cows by day and at night secretly meet the millions of *gopīs*.”

[31] Hearing this Kṛṣṇa smiled but remained silent. Understand his desire by his glance, Vṛndā then spoke in bliss: “Victory to Rādhā, perfect giver of bliss, the life of Gokula, who appears near Tārakā, who is blissful with Śyāmaÿā, and whose group is pure!” ||10||

[32] Vṛndā spoke in a choked voice, “O Paurṇamāsī! When do we start?”

[33] Paurṇamāsī said, “Though I am penniless, I should start this evening so that it will not be fruitless.”

[34] Vṛndā said, “Please instruct me so that I can gather all the ingredients of worship at the flower bower in the spring season.”

[35] Paurṇamāsī said, “I have nothing. You are my gold. What more can I order you?”

[36] Vṛndā said with a smile, “Previously we arranged meetings by tricks. That should be done now. Tell me the details.”

[37] Paurṇamāsī said, “Kṛṣṇa should go for the meeting as I instruct. You should take the *gopīs* in the normal way for correctness sake.”

[38] Vṛndā thought to herself:

That means “as married women.” The unmarried meeting is being criticized. If one goes with one’s wife alone, shame is without fault. If one goes with someone who is not one’s wife, one is afflicted with fear and

criticism. That shame is not without fault. Men become ashamed by illicit acts or secret acts. By illicit acts one accrues only fear. By secret acts one becomes ashamed. ||11 - 12||

Madhura-rasa is destroyed by fear, but nourished by shyness or shame. This is confirmed by all poets. It is discerned that meeting in fear born of illicit actions produces alarm and meeting in shyness produces *rasa*. || 13||

Some acts are accomplished by means of shyness alone and others are accomplished by means of terror. Knowing the truth about accomplishing actions, one should doubt those who want to accomplish their ends by any deceptive means. ||14||

[39] Though this is so, there could be some incidental fear. Previously fear was necessarily present. Now however it is only an obstacle.

The attraction of the *gopīs* for Kṛṣṇa was not generated from fear but was their very nature. They had to overcome their fear to fulfill that attraction. That attraction was kept within, so that no one would know its great strength. If fear arose from trespassing *dharma,* it could appear again after marriage, but then it is without function, just as fire may used to test gold but then is no longer useful. ||15||

[40] All of them became blissful and spread bliss to the others. They then walked on the path.

[41] Snigdhakaṇṭha asked in private, “O brother! Why is Kṛṣṇa not shy in front of Paurṇamāsī as he is in front of others? Why is he not shy in front of the *devatā* Vṛndā and the *brāhmaṇa* Madhumaṅgala? Someone will ask this. Can you answer?”

[42] Madhukaṇṭha said, “It seems that you really do not know. Paurṇamāsī is described by Śukadeva at the beginning of the *rāsa* dance. That *rāsa* dance took shelter of her. She is Kṛṣṇa’s inconceivable *śakti* for all the festive pastimes. Vṛndā is his *śakti* for pastimes in Vṛndāvana. Madhumaṅgala is Nārada’s counter image with a joking nature.”

[43] Then he said, continuing the story, “Informing Nanda, Yaśodā went to the forest and instructed her son and his wives to worship the Lord. All the people of Vraja were prevented from entering the forest. No fear was possible, just by thinking of Paurṇamāsī’s power. Taking Kṛṣṇa’s permission Paurṇamāsī instructed his wives. She indicated their desired goal.

“In other worship, the worshipper gains only some result. You who are worthy of worship will gain the highest goal immediately.” ||16||

[44] Paurṇamāsī completed instructing Rādhā and her group. For Candrāvalī and others however she tested their strength. Meeting with Madhumaṅgala, she then thought about the time that they should come. When Kṛṣṇa came in the twilight, with Nanda’s permission she took him into the bower. There Madhumaṅgala spoke to him with a laugh when they were alone, “If you are shy today, lotus-eyed Kṛṣṇa, what did the wedding accomplish?”

[45] Kṛṣṇa said in affectionate anger while hitting him lightly, “O shameless one! Keep quiet!”

[46] Vṛndā had prepared a group of bowers with her own hands. She brought Rādhā and her group into a special bower filled with flowers whose beauty made all greedy

and which was endowed with a gentle wind from the Yamunā.

[47] Kṛṣṇa’s arrival:

His body covered in yellow cloth, holding a thin stick in his hand, with a splendid belt holding his flute, Kṛṣṇa, with his hand on Madhumaṅgala’s shoulder, went to Paurṇamāsī’s bower with love. ||17||

[48] The *gopīs* arrival:

Ordered by their elders on a pretext, Rādhā and her group, wearing new cloth, jingling their golden, jewel-studded ornaments, went with Vṛndā to meet Kṛṣṇa. ||18||

[49] Kṛṣṇa, the abode of all happiness arrived at Paurṇamāsī’s hut without effort. Vṛndā arrived and put Rādhā and others in other bowers thick with intense joy. She then spoke:

“O Paurṇamāsī! Why do you delay? Rādhā and the others have arrived at the bowers. But it seems they are tired like *cātaka* birds in the summer and will be without concentration and energy for a while.”

[50] Hearing this, Paurṇamāsī and Madhumaṅgala developed tears in their throat and could not speak. But with agitated senses, they asked Kṛṣṇa to come to the *gopīs’* bower.

When Kṛṣṇa went towards Rādhā, the moon went through the sky to Viśākhā constellation. In Vaiśākha month, the moon imitates their actions. In this way they met. ||19||

[51] Entering, above he saw pictures made of jewels decorated attractively with flowers. And below there were beds. But he did not see Rādhā or her *sakhīs.* He

looked at the composition of the pictures without pride and with astonishment. Seeing him tremble, Vṛndā spoke.

[52] “Rādhā and others are resting a short distance away but I can smell their fragrance. The bower was prepared for your sudden coming in an attractive manner, but because of its solitary position they became shy. After I left they became even shyer”.

[53] Paurṇamāsī said, “Bring them by calling their names. Go and see them and then bring them.”

[54] Doing this, Vṛndā then approached Paurṇamāsī and said with a smile, “What should I say? They are so shy that they will go home. They are waiting for you, only with fear of breaking your order. How will they come on my command? However, when Kṛṣṇa was far away, I saw that they desired him. They were satisfied with smelling his fragrance, but otherwise they are shy. They must feel some cheating when I call them. ||20||

[55] Hearing this Paurṇamāsī’s mind became blissful. Going there she brought them after telling them several times, though they were still shy.

[56] The *gopīs’* arrival:

Putting Paurṇamāsī in front, with bowed heads and softly falling feet, Rādhā and her friends came to where Kṛṣṇa spread his effulgence. ||21||

[57] When the *gopīs* met Kṛṣṇa, the beauty increased by mutual enforcement–like waves meeting the ocean, flowers blossoming in the spring, or a musical composition nourished by its various notes.

Though the *gopīs* and Kṛṣṇa glanced at the beauty of the bower, their glances became bold, making each other's necks crooked. ||22||

[58] With excited heart Paurṇamāsī by requesting gently made Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa sit on one seat.

When the couple sat on the seat their black and gold complexions became like a sapphire and took on a new beauty, without distinction between the two. Seeing this, Paurṇamāsī could not introduce them to each other and for half a *daṇḍa* she became bewildered and could not offer the items of worship. ||23||

[59] Taking the help of Vṛndā, somehow the introductions were made, and the worship of most extraordinary worshipable Rādhā and Mādhava began, following the rules of *Bṛhad-gautamīya-tantra*. Previously Lakṣmī and Nārāyaṇa were mentioned but they are manifested from Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa.

[60] Lalitā and Viśākhā, among the eight principal heroines, take pleasure in being in his inner circle of devotees. They concluded that the couple alone is their benefactor:

"Let some women worship Kṛṣṇa for their own happiness. Let others worship him for his happiness. We do not know such worship. We think happiness is seeing Rādhā worship Kṛṣṇa who worships the *gopīs'* sweetness." ||24||

[61] I will now describe the worship which gives pleasure to the ears of the assembly. ||25||

Paurṇamāsī made one seat for Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa, which was decorated with flowers for the worship. Made of

gold and jewels, it was previously perceived by the eyes, but now it was perceived by the nose and skin as well.

She then welcomed them with words. Her welcoming words conquered nectar with their sweetness. Because of the welcome, their eyes with tears conquered nectar and their ears and eyes increased in prosperity and glory. ||26||

“Why do you two feel so shy at this worship?” Saying this in full concentration, with a slight smile, she offered the spotless foot-water mixed with camphor, established for worshiping Lakṣmī and Nārāyaṇa. ||27||

Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa accepted the pure, priceless *arghya* prepared by Paurṇamāsī. If they could be brought under control by a shadow of worship, this *arghya* was much more powerful to control them because it contained *anurāga.* ||28||

Who can praise the attractive, sweet mouthwash that Paurṇamāsī made? She made the most attractive mouthwash, which makes one sigh with bliss and which reflected the faces of the two lovers. ||29||

She offered *madhuparka* which was filled with flower nectar and gave bliss to Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa. In contact with the fragrance of their lotus faces, it seemed to become the nectar of their lips. ||30||

The couple could not give up drinking the *madhuparka* which became tasty by the touch of each other’s sweet lips. Paurṇamāsī therefore quickly gave the mouthwash again. But what could remove the taste of the *madhuparka* which stuck to their hearts? ||31||

Looking at the prepared bath water, Paurṇamāsī decided not to offer it since it was not proper to bathe at night. In

bliss she used a mirror to bathe their reflections, in order to complete the bath according to the rules. ||32||

Paurṇamāsī did not have an opportunity to dress them. Understanding they were shy to put on the cloth, she accomplished the dressing by showing it to the couple at a distance, in order to fulfill the rule. ||33||

Taking the opportunity of the rule for offering a sacred thread during worship (clearly prescribed in *Gautamīya-tantra* in discussing the eight-syllable *mantra*), Paurṇamāsī, seeing his desire for a thread suitable for a *vaiśya,* fulfilled that desire and offered the thread to him. ||34||

Paurṇamāsī made the couple wear remarkable ornaments made of flowers. They conquered the best jewel ornaments of Svarga by their incomparable fragrance and beauty. ||35||

She then offered cosmetics with the best fragrance which, on contacting the couple's bodily intense fragrance, gave pleasure to the people nearby and perfumed all the bowers and forests. ||36||

The garlands that she gave the couple took on greater beauty on their bodies. The rainbow lost its luster and lightning near the clouds lost its luster. They approached the couple and in fear merged into them. ||37||

She made the best *aguru* incense spread everywhere like a cloud which showered the finest fragrance and made the young grass (from which incense is made) spring up with hairs standing on end. ||38||

All the lamps she prepared, seeing the beauty of the couple, became nourished by their effulgence. It is not astonishing that the lamps increased their qualities by

the couple’s effulgence, for Kṛṣṇa distributes his effulgence to each *sakhī.* ||39||

See with amazement all the fruits and roots of the forest that Paurṇamāsī offered to the couple. The fragrance of the fruit even before eating gave satisfaction to places far away. ||40||

Paurṇamāsī gave fresh, fine betel nut purified by the *kāma-bīja* to the couple. She then showed shyness in asking them to agree to her personal request rarely granted (to take their betel remnants). ||41||

In order to conclude with her heart-felt offering of surrender, she arranged for services with incomparable opulence, using a gleaming umbrella, *cāmara* and fan which gave great joy and along with dancing, laughing and prayers. ||42||

[62] The prayer of submission:

Though my heart is satisfied by the worship I performed and objects that I desired to attain, another desire is giving joy to my heart. Please listen. The seed in the form of the articles of worship and the worship have become a tree. The tree will have fruit if you two have private happiness in this bower. ||43||

[63] When they heard this, the eyes of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa became filled with embarrassment. On the pretext of doing some work, she excused herself with Vṛndā and Madhumaṅgala. Waiting for this time, the *sakhīs* waited outside the bower, and entered the private happiness within using their ears.

Remembering the great fire of separation, and thinking of the meeting in the *rāsa* dance and at Kurukṣetra to be like putting ghee on the fire–thinking of him now as a

sphūrti only though he was in front of her, she fainted for a long time and made Kṛṣṇa's heart suffer. ||44||

[64] He gradually brought her back to consciousness. Coming before him but remembering the previous separation, she placed her forehead on his feet and moistened them with her tears from her miserable crying. Kṛṣṇa embraced her and wiped away her tears. How could any pastimes take place on that night? ||45||

Seeing their misery, helpers entered the bower to pacify them. Understanding their situation, the helpers were also overcome with grief. Embracing each other, with tears arising from disturbed hearts, overcome with grief, Rādhā, Kṛṣṇa and the *sakhīs* somehow passed the night till dawn appeared. ||46||

[65] In the morning, when they came out, their eyes were soaked in tears. Their lips had no marks of injury from teeth. Their hair was well fastened and their clothing was firmly in place. Seeing their condition at the end of night, Paurṇamāsī and Vṛndā surmised that the couples had not enjoyed pastimes alone but were remembering the suffering of previous separation. ||47||

[66] Then Paurṇamāsī with tears in her eyes spoke to Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa, "Though your minds cannot give up the pain of separation, to protect us, you must practice forgetting about it." ||48||

[67] Embarrassed and silent, the couple with bowed heads showed desire to do so. Separately they went to Vraja. Rādhā went on a hidden path with her *sakhīs.* Arriving home, after doing their morning ablutions and cleaning themselves, they served Yaśodā.

Kṛṣṇa went on the path with joking Madhumaṅgala, his confidential servants and various colorful friends.

Coming to Vraja, he entered the house with some of his friends and after taking bath, pleased the eyes of his parents and many others. ||49||

[68] After a *muhūrta* Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa again went with Paurṇamāsī to the forest and performed worship. When noon arrived and the sun spread its intense rays, Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa saw an attractive bower with shade in a lonely place. On the polite request of Paurṇamāsī to achieve great pleasure, they relaxed on a flower bed.

[69] Thirsty for pastimes, he entreated Rādhā many times. But she was overcome with grief. He glanced at her unhappily. She kept taking her hand away from his as if in anger. Her *sakhīs* explained her mental condition: “We will explain our friend Rādhā’s various emotions arising from grief in separation. But now we will explain what we see. If, because of grief from such separation, having so many hopes, she were not to become stunned, how could she maintain her life? We also could not survive! O Kṛṣṇa! When you return home there will be a most intense amount of suffering. How can one measure it, O master?” ||50||

[70] When their grief and tears became externalized everywhere, Kṛṣṇa wiped Rādhā’s face innocently and offered her some betel nut.

Overcoming the pain of separation, she fell on his chest and wept because of remembering the separation. He offered betel again and again to her mouth with gentle words. For a long time she could not chew the betel, nor could she spit it out. She could not even bite it. ||51||

Since she could not chew the betel, Kṛṣṇa raised her mouth and gave her his chewed betel. ||52||

[71] Pleasing her, again they returned to Vraja. After sleeping at night, Kṛṣṇa requested her and her *sakhīs* instructed her. Then she looked at him with peaceful eyes.

She could forget their previous meetings in Vṛndāvana and Kurukṣetra because *anurāga* produces newer and newer meetings. ||53||

Skillful at conciliation, touching her lotus hand, her creeper-like arms and her limbs with his hand, embracing her tightly, Kṛṣṇa pleased her. Bewildering her with the nectar from his lips, the crest jewel of playboys then desired to enjoy complete pastimes. ||54||

Hearing his words and her indistinct sounds, the *sakhīs* passed the night in happiness. ||55||

[72] Though the night ended, they kept embracing. The *sakhīs* began singing a song with a *rāga* suitable for the dawn:

> O friend! Remembering the couple, do not look for anything else.
>
> At the end of night the bee leaves the lotus. But it does not give up its pastimes.
>
> All the lotuses are blooming. But they do not see outside.
>
> The charioteer of the sun has risen. But the eye does not perceive dawn at all.
>
> The stars have lost their brilliance. The couple is not aware of the stars.
>
> The birds are chirping quietly but the couple remains silent.

The sound of churning yogurt arises in the village. Though it calls the couple, they do not answer.

Though the poet sings, they do not awake. Though the sun shines, they do not awaken. ||56||

[73] When they could not give up their attachment, Viśākhā gazed from the spaces in the branches and with a gentle smile spoke a few words: “O friend Lalitā! Look! Look! Your two friends have become bewildered.”

[74] Lalitā said, “O friend! That is true. Kṛṣṇa is wearing her clothing and she is wearing his clothing.”

[75] Viśākhā said, “I think that each is trying to imitate the other. Attracted to the other’s clothing they have reversed their clothing.”

[76] Lalitā said, “I conclude that they are engaging in a pastime. Forget it. Now listen. What is Rādhā saying?”

[77] Viśākhā said, “With tears in her eyes she says this: ‘You will not cheat me today as you previously cheated me by meeting me in a dream, O clever boy! Making me faint by your separation, how can I stay awake?’” ||57||

[78] Lalitā said, “Oh! Previously Rādhā stood in the hot summer winds of long separation. Now her body is cooled by the strong wind endowed with showers of happiness though enjoyment. But she cannot give up the impressions of previous suffering. Her heart has become agitated by two strong winds!”

[79] Viśākhā said, “Why are they late today? The sun has risen.”

[80] Lalitā said, “Enter the bower without making noise.”

[81] Entering, Viśākhā, while hiding her smile, spoke to Kṛṣṇa wearing Rādhā’s clothing: “O friend! See everything revealed in the morning light. Taking your

friend go outside." The couple looking at each other became embarrassed.

[82] Rādhā said, "O dear *sakhī*! Your friend here has used some magic on me. I have become completely confused. Oh! Do something so that Lalitā does not see us."

[83] Smiling, Viśākhā arranged their dresses and ornaments with a trembling hand. She then brought the couple outside the bower. Their intimate friends from close up and Paurṇamāsī and Vṛndā from far away saw the couple.

"Please look at the arrangement of their clothing arranged improperly because of haste." The words of madness entered the *sakhīs'* hearts as if a *devatā* were agitating their hearts. ||58||

[84] Paurṇamāsī came close. Rādhā, of pleasing nature, hearing the words, was embarrassed, and hid among her *sakhīs.* Kṛṣṇa, with a pleased face and bowed head, returned to Vraja. Later Rādhā also went back.

[85] When they went to the forest as previously at the end of the day, Rādhā asked Kṛṣṇa in the night, "Dear Kṛṣṇa, you must, with intimate pastimes, satisfy Lalitā and Viśākhā and many others of my group who endeavor for my happiness and never care for their own happiness." ||59||

[86] Kṛṣṇa said, "O Rādhā! Using some trick they can all enjoy these pastimes. What trick shall I use?"

[87] Smiling, Rādhā said, "Put on my clothing and enter the bower first."

[88] Kṛṣṇa said, "O dear Rādhā, I will do that."

[89] With much play, Rādhā dressed Kṛṣṇa in her clothing. Taking on Rādhā's form, Kṛṣṇa went in disguise in her clothing in front of Lalitā and Viśākhā. Imitating her voice he spoke: "O friends! Playing a joke on Kṛṣṇa I have come here secretly. Let me sleep with you for a while."

[90] Laying together, wearing Rādhā's clothing, he joked with the two *sakhīs* who thought he was Rādhā and then said, "O Viśākhā! Do you know what Kṛṣṇa is doing?"

[91] Though she had come there, Viśākhā became frightened, and leaving the place, on the sly observed Rādhā's actions for a long time: "That king of playboys is performing his pastimes here."

[92] Viśākhā, whose character cannot be understood, returned to the bower. To make Viśākhā give up her shyness, Lalitā began disrespecting her. She brought Viśākhā close to Kṛṣṇa dressed as Rādhā and disappeared on the pretext of promising to bring news of Kṛṣṇa's actions. After secretly seeing the fun and laughing in her mind, she approached the real Rādhā where she was hiding. Meeting with Lalitā and Viśākhā, Rādhā embarrassed all the other *sakhīs* by arranging similar meetings for them with Kṛṣṇa.

[93] In this way, at night they played many tricks, and on another night, Kṛṣṇa enjoyed with supreme Rādhā.

[94] At that time Rādhā made another request: "O master! Please arrange things exactly as I request. Our bodies have all been burned by the fire of separation like creepers in summer. To relieve our bodies, I desire to make a great festival visible to the eyes."

[95 - 96] Kṛṣṇa said, "O beautiful Rādhā! If I have attained you, I have attained all the *sakhīs.* If I do not

attain you I do not attain any of them. If you become happy, then I make all the *gopīs* your extensions. But please ask Paurṇamāsī, for she will bring all of them to me." ||60||

[97] When joy spread everywhere, the night had passed. Rādhā, through Viśākhā, requested Paurṇamāsī. Paurṇamāsī said, "I already tested Candrāvalī and Tārakā. My word will reach an extraordinary conclusion."

[98] Viśākhā said, "Rādhā has said the following to express the desire of the other *sakhīs:*

O friend, time which produced long absence of Kṛṣṇa was our destroyer and time which brings him near is the best." ||61||

[99] Paurṇamāsī said with a smile, "Rādhā's agreement always brings auspiciousness."

[100] She then spoke to Vṛndā: "Knowing the night has passed, make an announcement. Using my name, invite all the *gopīs* using pleasant words. I will come in the fruitful evening which bestows happiness and bring Kṛṣṇa to this pleasant forest."

[101] Vṛndā performed her tasks and revealed to the other *gopīs* the mercy arising from Rādhā's affection.

[102] Making the buds of the creepers of *gopīs* blossom, Vṛndā approached Paurṇamāsī to bring Kṛṣṇa, who would be pleased that they were all invited.

[103] With full satisfaction Paurṇamāsī said to Vṛndā: "My heart desires to worship Kṛṣṇa as in the night just as it is said in *Nārada-pañcarātra*: in the night one should perform worship of Kṛṣṇa overcome with desire, overcome with fatigue, amidst the *gopīs*.[21] Please

prepare the attractive pastimes of the *rāsa* dance as a suitable offering.”

[104] In the evening Paurṇamāsī through Vṛndā brought all the *gopīs* including Rādhā and Candrāvalī to the forest through the strength of her humility and affection. And she herself brought Kṛṣṇa, the husband of unlimited *gopīs.* Among all the *gopīs* Rādhā was the giver of bliss, like the moon among the stars, like the full moon among all the lunar phases, like the beautiful spring among all the seasons, like the metaphor among all literary ornaments, like *rasa* and *dhvani* (suggestion) in all types of poetry, like *mahābhāva* among all types of *rati* to Kṛṣṇa.

[105] Paurṇamāsī had the *gopīs* meet with Kṛṣṇa in a forest thick with flowers on the bank of the Yamunā, the abode which produces happiness, just as fifteen digits meet with the moon in a sky full of stars.

All those women who had not met Kṛṣṇa before he left for Mathurā, on meeting him now displayed the eight *sāttvika-bhāvas*. I consider that proper, for all those who met with Kṛṣṇa developed those symptoms to the highest degree (*sūddīpta*). Please say why they would not. ||62||

[106] Quickly Paurṇamāsī consoled all the women and embraced them. She then produced a jeweled- land by her skill and Vṛndā decorated it beautifully. It was a broad expanse in the shape of a lotus with a pericarp in the center, finely decorated. She made Kṛṣṇa sit in the center and had the *gopīs* sit around. She put Rādhā next to herself, desiring to elevate her, with a position superior to all others. The goddess of speech spoke with a laugh from the sky:

“Plant a *tamāla* tree (Kṛṣṇa) in the middle and all around place golden creepers (*gopīs*). Bathe the tree in nectar using the full water pot of the moon (Rādhā) since you are Paurṇamāsī.” ||63||

[107] Hearing this, with a smile Paurṇamāsī, gazing with open eyes, made the moon which was not full suddenly full.

[108] By the order of Paurṇamāsī, with the rising of the full moon, all darkness was dissipated. With her permission, one *tithi*, Rākā (full moon) remained. In the *mahā-rāsa* pastimes the moon became the lord of the stars. In this place, Paurṇamāsī performed many amazing feats for Kṛṣṇa.

Paurṇamāsī pulled Kṛṣṇa to Rādhā’s right side using the *āvāhana-mudra*. Shining like a lamp, he came quickly. ||64||

She had Rādhā sit to the left of Kṛṣṇa who was in the center since there was no space in the circle. ||65||

Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa shone in center of the circle of women who were situated at the edges of a huge lotus with glittering gems in the middle of the best forest laden with flowers in the eight directions. In the center was an umbrella–a moon of intense beauty filled with all qualities. ||66||

[109] Worshiping the arena with *āratrika*, Paurṇamāsī prayed: “Please fulfill our long-standing desire. The *rāsa* dance will be seen again. Understanding this, Kṛṣṇa with his wife nearby rose according to her instructions and producing a wealth of happiness, played on his flute a melody for the *rāsa* dance with many subdivisions (*bhairava, kauśika, hindola, dīpaka, śrīrāga,* and *megha rāgas*).

When he played the flute, the rivers stopped flowing, the rocks melted, low objects became elevated and elevated objects became low. Immobile objects moved and moving objects froze. Giving up shyness and manifesting joy, the women began the *rāsa* dance. ||67||

At the *rāsa* dance, when the jingling ornaments, the sound of the flute and the extended dancing arose, the women of Svarga who came to sing and make music fainted. ||68||

The women of Svarga experienced the musical beauty of the flute and the profuse ornaments with skillful, intense dancing. Other music and singing became depressed and suddenly stopped. Low class musicians, though accepted in front of important people, became silent in the *rāsa* dance. ||69||

The *gopīs* and Kṛṣṇa, with golden glow and sapphire luster, the essence of all beauty, were most attractive even without ornaments. What more can be said? All of them sang and all of them, radiating effulgence, danced intently. ||70||

Kṛṣṇa and the *gopīs* embraced and kissed, interrupting part of the dance. Because the disturbance was minor, they did not become distracted. ||71||

Though, earlier, suffering for a long time due to separation, now they danced with the greatest bliss on attaining his association. Understanding this secret, Paurṇamāsī out of *prema* had desired the *rāsa* dance. ||72||

Seeing Kṛṣṇa, attained by good fortune after a long time, coming from distant Dvārakā, at the *rāsa* dance occupied with unlimited associates as previously, the *gopīs,* though losing awareness because of becoming stunned,

perspiring, changing color, becoming choked up, shedding ears and having their hairs stand on end, maintained their beauty. Even in a conscious state, such beauty was rare. ||73||

[110] Seeing this, the *devatās* thought: “When he went to Mathurā he gave pain like death to the *gopīs*. Now he gives them bliss. The cause of pain is distance from Kṛṣṇa and the cause of joy is closeness to him. Rādhā, who previously almost died on not seeing Kṛṣṇa, now worships him. See! As the best of devotees, she plays with him.” ||74 - 75||

[111] Seeing the *gopīs* and Kṛṣṇa covered in perspiration arising from affection and with slack bodies, praiseworthy Paurṇamāsī said, “Now take rest and accept some other attractions.”

[112] Kṛṣṇa sat in the circle with each *gopī*. Paurṇamāsī worshiped them with sandalwood and milk with sugar and happily took each couple to separate bowers with beds.

Each *gopī* after long difficulties personally attained the one affectionate Kṛṣṇa, the crest jewel of cleverness, attractive in countless expansions with millions of *gopīs* who were endowed with the greatest skills. What poet can describe this in poetry? ||76||

In the battle of love, there were unlimited tears, continual trembling, immovable hairs standing on end, and intense joy. There were manifestations of perspiration, choked voices with broken words, praiseworthy and indescribable changes of color, internal and external stunned conditions and stunned eyes. Maintaining their battle formations, sometimes they won and sometimes they were defeated. ||77||

Though they came close to defeat Kṛṣṇa, in this battle of love, Kṛṣṇa won. ||78||

He constantly played with the *gopīs* in the bowers, sometimes on the river bank, and sometimes in other places. When sometimes he left a *gopī* and sometimes met a *gopī* in his absorbed condition, the women as previously developed anger. ||79||

Though a co-wife may cause obstacles, this is accepted as something which produces *rasa.* Examples are Yayāti receiving obstacles from Śarmiṣṭhā[22] and Vatsarāja from Ratnāvali. Though the obstacles are rare they cause suffering. ||80||

[113] In enumerating the eight types of heroines,[23] they are called by names like *proṣita-bhartṛkā, svādhīna-bhartṛkā, proṣita-patikā a*nd *svādhīna-patika*. They are not called *proṣita-jārā.*[24] (The heroines should be married to their lovers, not unmarried, with illicit relationships.). Let that be. Let us return to the topic. When the women broke the circle in anger, Kṛṣṇa made up with the women using his skills. ||81||

[114] When many types of play appeared, Kṛṣṇa made all the women come together and showed his knowledge.

They said with a smile, “Please show us just once all the knowledge of the Vedas and their *aṅgas*, along with the sixty-four arts that you learned from Sāndīpani. We will understand it all.” ||82||

[115] When the full moon day arrived like a guest, it became the joy of the two fortnights. Becoming happy on seeing the pastimes of the *rāsa* dance outstanding with Rādhā’s group, the moon became stunned for a long time, delaying its entrance into the dark fortnight. (Rādhā’s group delayed meeting Candrāvalī’s group.)

Full of desire, Kṛṣṇa thought of Rādhā. Rādhā continually served him by her mind and words. ||83||

[116] When Paurṇamāsī completed the worship and a few days had passed, the time was filled with bliss and the *kaiśora* period appeared to have just begun, filled with the *kaiśora* period every day as previously. At that time, Kṛṣṇa, while in hiding, heard Rādhā's and Viśākhā's private discussion.

[117] Viśākhā said, "O friend! Though time is endowed with new sprouts arising from the highest bliss, a type of hidden longing has appeared in you like a flower-bud."

[118] Rādhā said, "O friend, you speak the truth. You also have this longing."

[119] Viśākhā said, "What is that? Please reveal it."

[120] Rādhā said, "The poets say that even though the most exalted woman has her desires fulfilled, some desire remains. By some fate, such desire has arisen in us."

[121] Viśākhā said, "What is it?"

[122] Rādhā said:

yaḥ kaumāra-haraḥ sa eva hi varas tā eva caitra-kṣapās

te conmīlita-mālatī-surabhayaḥ prauḍhāḥ
kadambānilaḥ |
sā caivāsmi tathāpi tatra surata-vyāpāra-līlā-vidhau
revā-rodhasi vetasī-taru-tale cetaḥ samutkaṇṭhate ||

That very personality who stole away my heart during my youth is now again my master. These are the same moonlit nights of the month of Caitra. The same fragrance of *mālatī* flowers is there, and the same sweet breezes are blowing from the *kadamba* forest. In

our intimate relationship, I am also the same lover, yet still my mind is not happy here. I am eager to go back to that place on the bank of the Revā under the Vetasī tree. That is my desire.[25]

[123] Hearing these words from his hiding place, he embraced Rādhā with his arms and kissed Rādhā's face. He said, "O dear Rādhā! You have spoken well! You have spoken well! But instead of 'on the bank of the Revā under the Vetasī tree,' you should say, 'on the bank of Yamunā in a bower.' I am anxious to go to that Vṛndāvana, on the excellent southern bank of the Yamunā, shining with the essence of your beautiful, youthful pastimes, where our forefathers walked."[26]

[124 - 125] When Kṛṣṇa was considering this, Paurṇamāsī arrived with Vṛndā. When she arrived, she looked at Vṛndā's face and said, "O Kṛṣṇa, moon of Vṛndāvana! Vṛndā is making a request. *Bhāgavatam* says, 'O King Parīkṣit, when Rāma and Kṛṣṇa saw Vṛndāvana, Govardhana and the banks of the River Yamunā, they both enjoyed great pleasure.' (SB 10.11.36) That place on the southern bank of the Yamunā, with Govardhana, Yamunā and the bank of the Yamunā, is my dwelling place. Without that, I become withered. Decorate that place with your feet endowed moon-like toenails!" ||84||

[126] Accepting that proposal with greed, taking permission from Paurṇamāsī and Vṛndā, he went to Vraja to inform Nanda. Rādhā and Paurṇamāsī also went.

[127] Snigdhakaṇṭha then concluded with some verses:

O Rādhā! Just as your desire bore fruit, my desire has borne fruit. With great joy I have described this fruit

which persons like me can see, coming to Gokula after surmounting great obstacles. ||85||

O Rādhā! All the *gopīs* had *rāga* for attaining Kṛṣṇa and you had extreme *rāga*. The master who lives eternally in Vṛndāvana (though unseen by material eyes) in order to attain you after separation, always makes arrangements for delivering those who newly surrender and those who are the eternal associates of Vraja. ||86||

Understanding what the reciter has said, Kṛṣṇa and Rādhā did not see any difference between the pastimes and the recitation. ||87||

Chapter Thirty-seven

Entering Goloka

[1] Madhukaṇṭha began speaking in Nanda’s assembly.

[2] The very next day, with the opportunity for the fulfillment of all desires, in the midst of the topics, Kṛṣṇa spoke as follows in Nanda’s assembly: “If my father orders I will send the chariot back to Dvārakā and will go Vṛndāvana on the south side of the Yamunā with all the cows and cowherds following.”

[3] Nanda said in bliss, “O son! This has been everyone’s last remaining desire. But there are some special considerations.”

[4] Kṛṣṇa said, “Please tell me.”

[5] Nanda said with tears in his eyes, “O son! Everyone is in various states of internal fire of separation, fearful like madmen, even today, from outside persons like Akrūra coming to take you away. The people of Vraja understand this and others do not. They have a strong desire. Please fulfill that desire, since you are intelligent and powerful.”

[6] Madhukaṇṭha said to himself: “Hearing this Kṛṣṇa became silent and thought.

[7] ‘All their bodies are full of the sweetest affection. No one here attempts to see me as the Supreme Lord. Thus their request should be fulfilled through the knowledge gained from Sāndīpani at his hermitage (making it not

look like powers of God). They make no attempt to see my powers as the Lord. I will make them blissful by showering on them my powers and by that power they can attain my planet Goloka. They previously attained this place when I showed the Goloka, the best of all planets endowed with all wealth after submerging them in the water of Brahma-hrada. For this, I will use a chariot astonishing to the eyes.’”

[8] Madhukaṇṭha said aloud:

Kṛṣṇa then revealed his conclusive desire to them:

[9] “O father! When I submerged you in Brahma-hrada and pulled you out, you realized my extensive abode of Vṛndāvana. I learned from my studies in Avantipura the knowledge of entering such difficult places. This will not depend on immersion in sacred water as previously. My chariot will fulfill all your desires.”

[10] Everyone said, “Since everyone will know that Kṛṣṇa resides at all times in Vṛndāvana with his associates, but unseen by others, some wise people, knowing that you are merciful to the fallen, will come to Vṛndāvana and call out to you while weeping in order to attain their goal. But then they will fall into pain of separation as we previously did.”

[11] Kṛṣṇa said with a smile and tears, “The chariot will go in such a way that no one will detect it.”

[12] Everyone said, “Previously we saw the Yamunā and Govardhana within Vṛndāvana. We desire to see them again. How is that possible?”

[13] Kṛṣṇa said with a smile, “Though all of this is one substance, two manifestations are revealed in this world —the visible and the invisible. Previously you saw the

invisible manifestation but since I quickly pulled you out, you could not see it completely. Therefore though it appears novel, do not think there is a difference.”

[14] Hearing this, everyone said with happiness while looking at his face, “Though we should not say this, we will speak clearly. All of our internal and external actions are for you alone. Since you are independent and we are not, you should do this action in whatever way, for whatever reason, by whatever means, for whatever person, because of whatever person, in relation to whatever person and in whatever place you see fit.” ||1||

[15] Nanda said, “Do it so that my brothers such as Vasudeva do not feel misery.”

[16] Kṛṣṇa said, “I will do this so that it will be most auspicious for you.”

[17] Saying this, joyfully looking at the faces of Balarāma and Uddhava, he called Dāruka:

“O charioteer! Please arrange the chariot so that it can accomplish everything. All the people of Vraja should surpass the three worlds and enter Goloka.”

[18] Dāruka, offering respects said, “Though I do not know the details, as you, the order, I will accomplish since you are the supporter of the surrendered.”

[19] In a moment the chariot became broad enough to accommodate everyone. He brought the chariot to Kṛṣṇa.

That chariot immediately became effulgent with the greatness of fire. It had a place for the cows. Spreading its effulgence to all the worlds, it could not be gazed upon by the populace. No one could tell where it was standing, from where it came and where it would go. ||2||

Just as Kṛṣṇa is visible to the devotees and invisible to others, this chariot was visible to the people of Vraja but not to others. ||3||

[20] With Kṛṣṇa they all entered the chariot's upper portion, which was like the dwelling place at the base of Govardhana.

People with material eyes surmised that the chariot went upwards because of a powerful streak of light. Residents of Vaikuṇṭha thought it went higher than Vaikuṇṭha. Those who were absorbed in his pastimes saw that the cowherds who were taken from Brahma-hrada suitably attained the goal of being cowherds in Vṛndāvana. ||4||

[21] All the animals and plants with *anurāga* for Kṛṣṇa residing on the southern bank of the Yamunā, that did not board the chariot, attained Goloka by the strength of Paurṇamāsī and Vṛndā. The people of Vraja saw another amazing thing. What was previously invisible became visible. ||5 - 6||

To fulfill the desires of the people of Vraja, Kṛṣṇa took the chariot to Dvārakā.

Kṛṣṇa, Balarāma, Uddhava and Rohiṇī got on the chariot using his *śakti* of creating multiple bodies. ||7||

[22] After saying this, the reciter thought to himself: "When the people of Vraja got on the chariot and left they did not see Balarāma, Uddhava and Rohiṇī go to Dvārakā. They saw them in Gokula. Dāruka however did not see them in Gokula but on the chariot (going to Dvārakā with him)."

[23] Though it is proven that Kṛṣṇa and others, through their expansions, reside in Vraja, it is suitable that Uddhava also does.

Since he had prayed to take birth among the shrubs of Vraja, he should attain that goal for he is the assistant of the *gopīs*, Vṛndāvana and Kṛṣṇa. The *gopīs* are Uddhava's goal. Vṛndāvana is the abode of the *gopīs.* Kṛṣṇa is the master of Vṛndāvana. ||8||

[24] The *devatās*, seeing them disappear, were first grief-stricken, but then, seeing them clearly, they rejoiced and shouting, "Victory" while playing music, followed after them.

[25] The expansion forms in the pastimes at various places also have separate consciousness identities. Taking on a particular form and heart, everything is not revealed about all places since they are absorbed in the *rasa* of a particular pastime. Things are revealed which are suitable for the particular pastimes. For instance Lakṣmī and other forms do not experience the lamentation of Sītā and her expansions.

[26] The Yadus were not aware of any delay, but only experienced a short period of time and two months in Vraja extended itself to feel like a long time for the people of Vraja. This should not be considered astonishing since the power of Yogamāyā had been displayed many times previously.

[27] After thinking to himself, the reciter then spoke aloud concerning their entrance into Goloka:

On seeing Goloka, they experienced that everything there was most remarkable because of Kṛṣṇa and became blissful. Attaining their desires, the cowherds, with increased *prema,* offering respects internally, played there with enthusiasm. ||9||

Seeing all the pleasant forests, Kṛṣṇa, causing astonishment to Balarāma, played with his friends,

herded the cows, played the flute and produced complete happiness. ||10||

[28] The structure of Goloka which they entered is described in *Brahmā-saṃhitā* and elsewhere. The arrangement is revealed there clearly but must be searched out.

Though Kṛṣṇa is directly your son, and thinking of him as the Lord is not suitable, poets describe his great lordship with joy on seeing his great qualities (in the following verses). ||11||

[29] This Goloka is not visible to material eyes in manifest Vṛndāvana. This is explained in the previous volume and in this volume also.

Goloka is revealed by the variegated *cit-śakti* and is self-manifesting. It is suitable for pastimes with devotees and is described in the *śrutis* and *smṛtis.* ||12||

All things which manifest in Gokula and which cause manifestation in Gokula are suitable for Kṛṣṇa. That *śakti* produces things which are suitable for his service and does not create not unsuitable things. ||13||

Every Viṣṇu planet has only one Lakṣmī. Goloka surpasses Viṣṇu's planet according to the scriptures: Kṛṣṇa, served by thousands of Lakṣmīs, is the witness of his superiority. ||14||

Goloka is beyond all the universes and contains all the Vaikuṇṭhas, all forms like Vāsudeva, all devotees, all the planets seem by Brahmā after Kṛṣṇa killed Aghāsura, all the *gopīs*, and various forms of Kṛṣṇa who has all qualities. ||15||

Cintāmaṇi exists in other places such as Vaikuṇṭha but the land in those places is not completely *cintāmaṇi.* If it

is, then liberation, superior to desirable wealth, does not appear in those places. If liberation exists there, then beyond liberation, excellent *bhakti* to Govinda and *prema-bhakti* exist only in Goloka. What can compare to that? ||16||

Desire trees exist as a species in other places but in Goloka even the *arka* tree has a desire-tree nature which is remarkable. *Artha, dharma, kāma* and *mokṣa* take on the incomparable, tasty form of worship of the Lord. ||17||

Though the *devatās* drink nectar, they still experience birth and death. In Goloka how can I describe just the water since it is filled with streams of nectar from the lotus feet of Kṛṣṇa which are the object of the *devatās* mediation, but cannot be attained by them? ||18||

In Goloka the cows, nourished by the sound of his flute, give torrents of milk from mountain-like udders, forming an ocean of milk. Goloka is surrounded by moats of milk and is thus famous as Śvetadvīpa, the white island, in *mantras* and yatras. ||19||

Goloka, known as Śvetadvīpa, the world of Kṛṣṇa, can be known only by the mercy of Kṛṣṇa. Those on the earth who know about Goloka are rare, what to speak of living there. ||20||

In Goloka, the *devatās* and planetary deities fly in the sky in airplanes. The pastimes on earth also have *devatās* in airplanes because the Gokula on earth is the same as Goloka. ||21||

In Goloka Vāsudeva, Pradyumna, Aniruddha and Saṅkarṣaṇa act as protective deities surrounding the place. In Goloka there are many other praiseworthy objects. ||22||

[30 - 31] Goloka, like the lord’s form, is described as unlimited, though it is perceived to have limits like the edge of the milk ocean, which seems to have no shores in all directions. Goloka is covered above by stars, sun and moon. In its eight directions are colorful, earth-like planets having spiritual natures. There is a pasturing ground in the center of Goloka called Vṛndāvana, though this is not known to the knowers of scripture. However, I will describe a little of that place.

There are *tamāla* trees on golden earth and golden flowers on sapphire earth. There are sapphire leaves on golden trees and other combinations as well. If the creator tried to imitate even one of the leaves, he would lose his fame as a creator. ||23||

The bowers are made of gems in some places. In some places the trees are more desirable than the houses. In some places the creepers act like dancers. In some places the plateaus are respected as the equivalent of jewels. ||24||

The rivers are resplendent with lotuses in one direction. In another direction the land is filled with flowers. The ground shines white like camphor. Within this land are the arenas for *rāsa*, sometimes in flower groves and sometimes on towering mountain plateaus made of gems. ||25||

When the breezes do not sway the flowers and leaves, the motionless trees look like pictures. When the birds are not attracted by the sweetness of Kṛṣṇa’s flute, they also become motionless like pictures. ||26||

The bees hum like the thumping of drums. The *aśvattha* trees play the *vīṇā.* The cuckoos sing and the peacocks dance. The forest where such arts take place without

effort becomes equivalent to all the places of Kṛṣṇa's pastimes. ||27||

Some birds imitate the songs, and some birds imitate the instrumental music. Some birds imitate the dancing. They give the greatest beauty to Vṛndāvana. But among the birds those colored black and gold, and those which utter the names of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa and indicate their pastimes, are closest to me. ||28||

All the animals make friends with each other. Consider this to be most amazing. Their lives are united as one. They sport about with Kṛṣṇa as their soul. ||29||

In the cow pastures on the edge of Goloka, the grass shines like emeralds. In those pastures the cows are all protected by Kṛṣṇa. ||30||

In the peripheral forests Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma herd the cows, joke, embrace, perform pastimes, express love and melt everyone's' hearts by their affection. ||31||

In Goloka sometimes Kṛṣṇa performs amazing magical tricks in the assembly. Though the emotion of fear of enemies is not real, its semblance gives joy to the audience. ||32||

In Goloka there are white cows illuminated by the rays from the gold on their horns and hooves. The land becomes flooded with the milk flowing from their pot-like udders. They are worshiped affectionately with *cāmaras.* Attracted to Kṛṣṇa more than to their calves, they perspire in his association. They have auspicious marks on their faces and emanate affection from their bodies. ||33||

The calves are like soft butter from an ocean of yogurt. They are like babies of the moon, a transformation of the

nectar of Kṛṣṇa’s smile. The calves wander about and play in Vṛndāvana. ||34||

Equivalent to Kṛṣṇa’s pastimes, the calves, shining white, attractive for their restlessness in infancy and youth, eager to play with their friends, fighting by using their new, spotless horns, dazzling to the eye with their various movements, take on a special beauty. ||35||

The bulls with auspicious natures, though appearing fierce, engage in play. They are pure white but their bodies are smeared with ash and dust. They are bound by ropes and have bells on their necks. Their tongues are like snakes. Their horns appear to be two sets of piled up dreadlocks (of Śiva). Their eyes are like fire. On their foreheads are marks like fragments of the rising moon. ||36||

What to speak of songs and dancing to call the cows, the cowherds have natural sweetness of singing and dancing in all their speech. ||37||

[32] The devotees describe Goloka in this way:

The singing in Goloka defeats honey by its sweet notes and defeats the notes of Vedic chanters. Its ornaments are the emotions and *rasas* that arise from thirst for Kṛṣṇa. ||38||

The gait of Kṛṣṇa attracts the swans thought they are not present. From far off, his gait gives pain to the elephants of the directions and drives heavenly dancers insane. Ah! How can poets describe Kṛṣṇa’s gait even in millions of years? ||39||

[33] In Goloka Kṛṣṇa’s flute acts as the supreme ornament.

All entities including bees always help the residents of Goloka to experience their love for Kṛṣṇa. But among the assistants, the flute becomes their greatest friend because even from a great distance it immediately informs them of Kṛṣṇa. ||40||

In Goloka the rivers with various hues flow everywhere like liquid gems. Sometimes they become petrified by the sound of the flute and sometimes they shine with the effulgence from their jeweled waves. ||41||

In Goloka the mountains are full of happiness. Their stone limbs melt by the nectar of the flute. The stones become like mud and become marked with Kṛṣṇa's footprints. When the flute stops, the rocks become hard again and the footprint impressions become their ornaments. ||42||

In Goloka all the lakes give all pleasures. They are resplendent with all types of lotuses and water lilies. They are like the ocean in depth and breadth. In the water's reflection Kṛṣṇa's face shines like the moon and his jewel earrings shine like the sun. ||43||

The Yamunā remembers Kṛṣṇa by her name (Kṛṣṇā) and her color (black). In Goloka, Mānasa-gaṅgā is his heart. ||44||

Though the Yamunā is daughter of the sun (which is the friend of the lotus), she not only cherishes lotuses, but is also fond of blue lotuses and white water lilies. With pure nature she protects all things as her own body. ||45||

[34] At the rivers he herds the cows, plays in the water with his friends, rests on the bank of the river, sleeps at the base of a tree, wakes up and watches the fish playing in the water. ||46||

Vṛndāvana, decorated with various flowers, endowed with the Yamunā and Mānasa-gaṅgā as its two garlands, with the jeweled Govardhana as *tilaka,* marked with the *cakra* by his footprints, taking the form of a devotee initiated into deity worship, attracts the hearts of the devotees. ||47||

[35] The situation within Goloka should be described. In the center of Vṛndāvana forest is Gokula, filled with *gopīs,* who are the object of meditation for the fortunate. In the north-east, Yamunā satisfies the desires of all. In the south-east there are some places dressed like fire, shining with the desire not to accept association with outsiders with whom they had previously associated.

[36] In the south-west, the wise describe mountains which spread festive joy. Nearby, the river named Mānasa-gaṅgā flows. Though there are eight famous mountains in Gokula–Govardhana, Bahusthana, Saugandhika, Dhavala, Śona, Rāṅkava, Aśṭakūta and Varaṣanu–all of them take shelter of Govardhana.

[37] Śrī Govardhana is seen in the southern side of the lotus of Gokula. Near the Yamunā in the north-east, the beautiful Bhāṇḍīra banyan tree nicely shines.

[38] First Govardhana will be described. It is the perfection of all gems, with an auspicious body, appearing to have been built by Viśvakarmā, the amazing architect in the universe. Some devotees with a greed for Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma come from far off because of the effulgence emanating from the emeralds and rubies in some of its places. The *devatā* women, burning with pain on not seeing Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa, come to a spot where there are emeralds streaked with gold in order to cool their hearts by that beauty. The cows come

galloping to places decorated with huge peaks of crystal, mistaking the place for a herd of cows. Searching for the cows which have disappeared, men, having faith in Kṛṣṇa's instructions, finally find the cows. Kṛṣṇa derives great pleasure from the caves which are like temples. Groups of trees appear to be towns. The fruits are suitable for selling. On the mountain the birds seem to be engaged in conversations as if transacting sales. On Govardhana there are two gemstone seats, white and black, worthy of kings, considered to be the place for trading goods. There are trees thick with flowers and fruit, acting like an umbrella. Some of the trees have flower clusters like *cāmaras*. Waterfalls arising from lakes act like servants.

Waterfalls, whose water falling from above is ideal for showering and for purifying the mouth, make the need for wells in the fields unnecessary because of their streams. On the lake on Govardhana, in a house bright with lotuses, Kṛṣṇa plays with the *gopīs* who are attached to him by their affection. ||48||

Sometimes he looks at the cows from a pinnacle. Sometimes he plays with friends. Sometimes he secretly rests in a jeweled cave and enacts the best of pastimes. ||49||

What to say? Famous for his dark-blue color, colorful with many minerals, playing attractively on his flute, wearing yellow cloth, he is worshiped by all inhabitants of the earth and protects the cows. Govardhana is the same color, marked with minerals. It increases pleasure by sounds made by the wind contacting the bamboo, towers high in the sky, is worshiped by all mountains, and nourishes the cows. ||50||

[39] The *bhāṇḍīra* tree, though master of much less land, is praised in Vṛndāvana because it is decorated with pastimes of Kṛṣṇa and is expert at serving him.

The *bhāṇḍīra* tree is like a king, with the forest called Bhāṇḍīra as his kingdom, with various trees as his citizens, with birds and animals as his ministers, with the very center as his palace, with the flat stones as his throne, and the creepers as his queens. ||51||

The *bhāṇḍīra* tree, one *yojana* high and one *yojana* broad, has fresh leaves shining intensely like emeralds. Satisfying with its grass carpet, it acts as Kṛṣṇa's huge house and its many cavities serve as countless rooms. ||52||

Its long branches stretch across the Yamunā and, covered with flowers in some places, it appears like a couch. Its creepers of fragrant flowers are swings. Here Kṛṣṇa, desirous of pastimes, plays with groups of *sakhīs.* ||53||

[40] Though Bhāṇḍīra and Govardhana are far away, desiring to serve Kṛṣṇa, they act as his fixed sitting places. Having equal desire to serve him, they look at each other with raised heads. They appear to be sending messages to each other in the form of birds coming and going. Vṛndāvana-lakṣmī, residing with these two whose services surpasses that of all others, conquers the other Lakṣmī.

Some places carry breezes laden with the cool water of rivers where the seasons appear with their unique features even without a season, where all seasons appear within one day according to their wish, and where deer and monkeys of all species make noises as they play. In these places, his friends, crest jewels

among all people, frolic. In some places the sun heats up sunstones till they burst into flame, making the places hot. Going nearby at his leisure, Kṛṣṇa hears the crickets which pierce the ears with their shrill sounds, defeating all other sounds and laughter. Some places have mountains where rivers run crookedly, with waterfalls flowing from the peaks, giving happiness by their showers and relieving the thirst of *cātaka* birds whose cries echo in jeweled caves which Kṛṣṇa enters to take rest in comfort.

[41] In some places where lotuses and tree lotuses continually bloom from the sounds of Kṛṣṇa's flute and the swans and cuckoos perform pastimes with their singing, the *gopīs*, with *anurāga,* surround Kṛṣṇa, the very form of *rāsa* and pastimes in the bowers. In the middle of the Yoga-pīṭha, most worthy of meditation, the various seasons in sequence please Kṛṣṇa, the form of happiness with complete auspicious from beginning, to middle and to end.

In Vṛndāvana the seasons, having many opportunities, establish Kṛṣṇa and serve him with great longing, showering agreeable objects by their brilliant beauty, offering rare and plentiful flowers as gifts, and bringing various birds as their friends, for they are like civilized people who hold festivals at all times. ||54||

[42] Let us end the description as the work will become too large.

[43] Within Gokula, I will now describe the giant lotus, the essence of Gokula, endowed with innumerable leaves, where Nanda has many houses.

[44] The petals of this great lotus are the abodes of all happiness. On the tips are attractive structures, the

residences of the cows, surpassing Vaikuṇṭha. Desire trees are the cows' shelters. In the middle of the desire trees are the many cow sheds of Nanda and around that are many other sheds. In this central place with Nanda's cowsheds are many jeweled pavilions without roofs used for sitting to inspect the cows.

[45] During the day some of the places are filled with new-born calves and at night they are filled with milking cows which surpass the best s*urabhī* cows. In the morning and evening the place is filled the Kṛṣṇa, Balarāma and cowherds. The place fixes itself in the hearts of the cowherds, sages and kings what to speak of the hearts of ordinary folk. ||55||

Calling the cows repeatedly is part of the milking process. Kṛṣṇa laughs heartily, plays with his friends and then happily returns home. Seeing this, all people desire extra eyes. ||56||

[46] The cowherds come home and go to the forest using paths. The paths are described now.

Those paths on which Nanda walks, which are attached to Kṛṣṇa, which are filled with topics of Kṛṣṇa, and which are used by the *brāhmaṇas*, are taken by the *devatās* to be equivalent to the Vedas. ||57||

[47] The petals give joy to all from childhood and flourish in the rapturous forests, on both sides of the paths. The petals, like slightly curled lotus petals, flourish near the water canals and cannot be violated by outside people. Because of the thick branches, they cannot be seen from the path.

[48] The paths going to the king's palace are now described. Joined to the pericarp of the lotus, the roads are embellished with rising stairs having many steps

studded with gems. These roads support all the forests of Vṛndāvana. They are like motionless tongues relishing the sweet taste of the fragrances of the forests. Upto here

[49] The roads lead to enclosures which are like the stamens of the pericarp. There the cowherds with their servants, the best priests and craftsmen, have dwellings.

[50] Those dwellings within the lotus appear brilliant like the disk of the sun. The inhabitants are described to be portions of Nanda, since they share his wealth.

[51] In these places, the *sādhana-siddhas* who, with similar *bhāva,* stay with Kṛṣṇa's father and brothers, show friendship because of loving pastimes, or act as servants, living auspiciously in effulgent Vraja, cannot be viewed as different from the eternal associates. ||58||

"O mother! O father! O brother!" Calling those devotees having moods of parents or brother, Kṛṣṇa gives them more joy than his actual parents and brother. In great bliss, they forget everything. ||59||

[52] Within this enclosure lies the assembly area with many remarkable houses.

[53] The best of houses, with the appearance of celestial vehicles, imitating the inhabitants, happily face each other. They seem to glance by their cat's eye gems, and laugh uncontrollably with flashing diamonds. They show great *anurāga* through effulgent rubies. They seem to cry unlimited tears with their strings of spotless pearls. They gossip together through the chirping of intoxicated cuckoos.

[54] The people in the houses always sit on golden seats and talk about Kṛṣṇa and Balarāma. Immersed in their

relationships, they forget they have bodies. How to describe this?

[55] Whenever Kṛṣṇa satisfies these people by his beautiful presence, they act like *cakora* birds breaking a fast and think they are newly born.

In the assembly when various great poets display their composition to be heard and seen, which describe Kṛṣṇa's birth and other pastimes, and give bliss to Kṛṣṇa who happily sits with his father, brother and friends and thousands of others, they make the inhabitants re-experience events which have long passed. ||60||

[56] Two enclosures have been described in detail.

[57] Between these two areas are five other chambers. These are the places where Nanda lives. These places satisfy everyone's' desires since they are the residence of Kṛṣṇa and his consorts.

[58] The building in the center, the palace, completely surpassed all the other buildings by its excellence, being neither too high nor too low. To its west is the residence of Yaśodā. To the north is the residence of Balarāma and his wife. To the east is the residence of Nanda. To the south is the residence of Kṛṣṇa, the lord of the Lakṣmīs of Gokula and persons like myself.

[59] This is the king's residence, made of seven areas, for all the living entities.

[60] The individual houses within these areas, constructed with many stories, increase one's desire to go there.

[61] Though all the buildings are made of jewels, just as the head is the best limb, the palace in the center is the best. ||61||

[62] In the center is the main palace having many pillars, worthy of meditation, joyful for the devotees, the embodiment of all crowns, with a mansion shaped like Meru.

[63] Furnished with flags, the palace seems to be brought to life by their fluttering movements.

[64] Kṛṣṇa sometimes ascends this palace with his friends and, embraced by his effulgence which conquers the most famous sapphire, looks at the people of Goloka who come to see him. He gives them all bliss simultaneously.

When the moon of Gokula climbs the jeweled-palace and spreads his rays, he showers their eyes with his beauty, agitates their minds with affection, nourishes their life and makes their hairs stand on end. ||62||

[65] What to speak of those living in the palace and becoming stunned with bliss, the sages accept this place to be the personification of transformations of *prema (sāttvika-bhāvas).*

Look! The flags of many colors, flapping in all directions in the wind, see Kṛṣṇa through eyes painted on the flags. ||63||

The pots, shining like the moon, complete in their beauty, elevate the houses in status. These are the auspicious forms used in all Kṛṣṇa’s dear festivals. ||64||

The roofs of the houses, shining white, sparkling with gems, seem to be joyful with hairs standing on end from the pastimes of Kṛṣṇa. ||65||

Peacocks and doves play on the roofs and sing attractively. Acting like devotees, they astonish Kṛṣṇa’s eyes and ears. ||66||

The walls shine attractively with pictures made of gems. Even today the pictures display the birth pastimes of Kṛṣṇa. ||67||

The houses remain fixed at all times. With their purity they represent the fame of the devotees. In all the houses and yards, Kṛṣṇa's and Rādhā's names are fixed. ||68||

The variegated gems with brilliant light make the rooms colorful because they have one outstanding quality: they are like lamps at night. ||69||

It is suitable that all the yards are compared to the hearts of spotless devotees for they act as shade for all devotees of Kṛṣṇa. ||70||

Goloka is more beautiful than beautiful, greater than Svarga. Within Goloka, Gokula is superior. The residents are superior. Brahmā and others desire their foot dust in that place. Kṛṣṇa, who is like a gem for maintaining their lives or the limbs of their bodies, also longs for those residents. Though he goes elsewhere he resides with them always. ||71||

[66] Kṛṣṇa desires that those who have not developed spiritual knowledge develop *prema* for him. What to speak of persons who already experience pastimes filled with *prema*, and what to speak of those who experience Kṛṣṇa as nectar after the fire of long separation and who have faith that Kṛṣṇa will not again go to Dvārakā. These are the persons that Kṛṣṇa desires.

These devotees have the intense bliss of feeling, "Today Kṛṣṇa has come," just as they had when he returned to Vraja from Dvārakā. ||72||

After Kṛṣṇa returned from Dvārakā, there was increasing bliss for many days that followed. Relishing songs of meeting Kṛṣṇa after great suffering, they forgot themselves completely. ||73||

All the animals and plants which appear in the pastimes on earth attain Kṛṣṇa in Vṛndāvana within Goloka. Serving Kṛṣṇa in great bliss, they know no other object of beauty and auspiciousness. ||74||

The trees, mountains, rivers, birds, animals, forest *devatās* like Vṛndā, the cows, the *gopīs*, friends and elders, all have intense desire to serve. Separation occurs, and after much suffering, they meet again. At that time they all have full affection and experience the beauty of Kṛṣṇa ever-fresh at all times. ||75||

The living entities of Vraja hear him, smell him, see him, and touch him. Attaining him after a long time, with intense thirst they even lick him continually! ||76||

The people of Vraja are happy singing about his pastimes from birth to killing Keśi.

They also experience happiness on singing of his killing Kaṃsa and returning. ||77||

The people of Vraja are not at all astonished, but rather are joyful that from birth Kṛṣṇa plays with women. They are extremely happy about his wealth and power in Dvārakā, because, having affection for Vraja, he gave up Dvārakā and returned home. ||78||

It is well known that the sages say that if one offers Kṛṣṇa a *tulasī* leaf or drop of water, he becomes indebted and falls under that person’s control. Therefore, giving up the people of Vraja who gave everything to him,

killing demons, and then returning made him most ashamed. ||79||

He is very ashamed that he gave up his father and others whose only goal was Kṛṣṇa and accepted enjoyment far away in Dvārakā. The people of Vraja are also ashamed. He gave his wealth in Dvārakā for their sake. “The happiness in meeting us here is only a cover over his wealth.” ||80||

Going far away, he gathered many people equal to the people of Vraja but, dissatisfied, he returned to Vraja. Desiring extraordinary, auspicious *prema* only with them, nourishing those devotees who were the very form of *prema*, Kṛṣṇa attained full bliss. ||81||

Kṛṣṇa appeared as the grand spiritual goal for servants, as remarkable service for friends, as a glance for his parents and as the supreme soul for the *gopīs.* The servants accept his feet, the friends accept his arms, the parents accept his head, and the *gopīs* accept the lotus in his heart. He exists in these two forms in Vraja. ||82||

Cared for by his mother, with the permission of his mother he goes to the forest to herd the cows and plays with Balarāma and his friends. Returning home, he glances at his friends when they say, “Kṛṣṇa is our life.” ||83||

[67] The reciter concluded:

Ah! Kṛṣṇa who killed Kaṃsa and other demons with their afflicting armies, and gave joy to his suffering parents, who extinguished the sorrow of the *gopīs* who thought they were married to someone else, and who stopped everyone’s suffering, shines in Vraja, glancing at the whole world. ||84||

Kṛṣṇa’s consecutive pastimes that he performed on returning to Vraja with heart afflicted by separation will be described in brief. Meeting with his friends and coming to the assembly he binds up my heart. ||85||

[68] With choked voice, tears in his eyes and folded hands, Madhukaṇṭha looked at Kṛṣṇa and remained silent for a few moments amongst the assembly members.

[69] Nanda with his brothers, making all the members happy, called him repeatedly, embraced him and covered him with his tears.

[70] Satisfying all their desires, Nanda then offered the two reciters to Kṛṣṇa. Who can estimate all the gifts that Nanda and the assembly members offered. Who can describe the mercy, a transformation of greatest piety, that Yaśodā and the other women gave the two reciters?

[71] On giving the mercy, she saw them as replicas of her own son.

[72] Then the bards of Vraja, offering respects, recited prayers of auspiciousness:

The moon of Kṛṣṇa who arose from the milk ocean of Nanda spreading his fame everywhere nourished the three worlds. Forget about nourishing elsewhere! Going far away to kill demons, he returned to Vraja. May he always be visible to your eyes. ||86||

[73] The prayers:

O best of the black, O excellent form! Destroyer of demons! Cutter of bondage! Ocean of happiness who takes birth! Killer of Pūtanā who dressed as a mother!

You gave her liberation and burned her body. You killed Śakatāsura! Your goal is to protect the earth.

You killed him to prevent your mother from crying, and laughed to hide from people's eyes his goal of cheating the earth.

You acted according to the name given by Garga. You killed Tṛnāvarta. You are praised by your friends with devotion. You played with Balarāma. You pretended to eat dirt.

You showed Yaśodā the universe and astonished her. You astonished the creator. You released the calves. You took pleasure in decorating yourself with minerals. You showed bravery in attempt to steal the butter.

Seen by your mother you fled in fear. You cried for your mother's milk. You stole the butter quickly and caused astonishment. You fled in fear of punishment and Yaśodā tied you up.

You broke the *arjuna* trees and the two *devatās* offered you respects. Your father lamented your bondage and released you. You were pleased on seeing the green forests. You mixed with the people of Gokula and the cows.

You killed Vatsāsura and Bakāsura. You killed Vyomāsura. You returned to Vraja. You destroyed the pride of Aghāsura, arrogant to all people. O sinless Kṛṣṇa! You gained fame by dancing on Kāliya to defeat him.

You herded the cows. Through Balarāma you had Dhenuka killed. Pralamba was killed. Your glance created auspiciousness. You showed false fear as a joke. You were greedy to taste nectar. You increased Govardhana's respect, making it worthy of worship.

You worshiped Govardhana and spread the best *dharma*. You lifted Govardhana which is filled with happiness like Ananta. Proud Indra became angry and poured rain. You expertly defeated the rain.

The *kāma-dhenu* and all the *devatās* of Svarga bathed you and you nourished them. ||87||

You are now on the excellent lap of Nanda and your heart as melted with desire. My heart desires to teach my eyes to stop blinking so I may see you, for my heart does not desire separation. ||88||

Also:

You conquered Varuṇa who took your father and destroyed his doubts. When you showed Goloka to your cowherd friends, the Vedas praised you.

The Gandharva named Sudarśana, in the form of a snake, saw you. You hit Śaṅkhacūḍa with trees so his jewel would fall off. Then he died. You protected your people by killing Ariṣṭāsura, who made fearful sounds.

You killed Keśi by putting your fine hand in his mouth. When Akrūra came to tell you to kill Kaṃsa you met with him and went to Mathurā where you killed the dyer. You wore astonishing clothing.

You gave the best gifts to the weaver. Your body became beautiful with the beautiful garlands of the garland-maker. You used strength to straighten Kubja's body. You put the sandalwood she offered on your body.

You were satisfied with her prayer. Asking where the sacrificial arena was, you showed great strength by breaking the bow. You killed the guards who spoke

harshly. The first among your associates, you killed the elephant in the arena.

You also killed the mahout. You put its tusk on your shoulder. You killed Kaṃsa's wrestlers. You gave happiness to the devotees. You killed Kaṃsa but you doubted whether to liberate him.

You were merciful to Ugrasena and he became king. You came to him with a request. You met all the Yadus, told the news to Nanda and sent him back to Vraja and made the people of Vraja happy.

You acted as the son of your mother and father. You took initiation. The sages respected you. You understood the meaning of scriptures. You studied *dharma-śāstra* and the sixty-four arts. You obtained the beautiful conch from the demon Pañcajana.

Yamarāja worshiped you and offered respects by your mercy. You gave your *guru* his son out of gratitude.

Going south, you, with lotus eyes, returned to Mathurā. On going, you created auspiciousness for your friends. But remembering Vraja you became filled with grief. You sent Uddhava to Vraja and gave everyone joy. On hearing about their joy, your sorrow was removed.

You fought with Jarāsandha but did not kill him. Instead you fled. ||89||

Oh! Visible to Nanda, recalling your pastimes and showing some shyness, you make him happy. By showing such mercy, with bliss rising in my heart, I do not desire any other object. ||90||

Also:

You were worshiped as a king on the request of the *devatās.* Seventeen times in battle you defeated

ignorant Jarāsandha and then tied him up. You were praised for this. As if in fear of Kālayavana, you fled.

Thinking about him, showing cleverness you burned him to ashes through famous Mucukunda and smiled gently. You quickly fled from Jarāsandha who was nearby and remained in Dvārakā for a long time.

Fighting a terrible battle on stealing Rukmiṇī, you destroyed many demons and made the citizens happy. Obtaining Satyabhāmā in a proper way, Jāmbavān praised you. Jāmbavatī took shelter of you.

You became the source of sweet pastimes for Kālindī. Defeating her two brothers in Avantīpura, you married Bhadrā full of auspicious qualities. Defeating seven bulls you married Nāgnajitī.

This brought you auspiciousness. You married the daughter of the king of Madra named Lakṣmaṇā. You killed Naraka, son of the earth and protected the citizens. You married the daughters of kings and *devatās* and were without suffering.

Stealing the *pārijāta* tree from Indra you gave bliss to the universe. You were the cause of being victorious over the power of the *devatās.* You bewildered Śiva with the yawning weapon in the battle for Pradumnya.

You showed skill in cutting off Bāṇa’s arms to give him mercy. You destroyed the disguise of the imposter Puṇḍraka who thought he was intelligent. You destroyed the king of Kāśī’s army by your *cakra.* Going to the house of the Pāṇḍavas of Kuru lineage you made Yudhiṣṭhira happy.

Your blissful mercy was exceptional.The children in the palace were not afraid of you. They worshiped you with

many items. You were worshiped because of your strength and dynasty. You cured the fatal disease of Śiśupāla.

You destroyed the impenetrable Saubha. You produce auspiciousness for the earth. You came to Mathurā out of great attraction, taking the advice of Nārada. Like a lion, you attacked the elephant Dantavakra.

You were praised and worshiped by Śiva and then gave joy to Vraja again. You became happy in Vraja. You are the giver of great happiness to Vraja. You do not leave Vraja. You are dear to your father's family. You are worshiped by your friends who have happiness equal to yours. ||91||

Though you become attached to people who see you, you are definitely controlled by Nanda's glance. But you are never fully satisfied with that. How can we praise your happiness? Our voices become choked so that people consider us mute. ||92||

Also:

Your parents relieve you of the fatigue from the journey. Everyone prays to you. You produce ecstatic symptoms in your friends' hearts filled with *prema.* Nothing can be compared to your happiness on getting married.

You show attraction to your friends. You bathe in the waters of shyness arising in your joyful heart. You show attachment to the members of the assembly. Your coming to Vṛndāvana cannot be understood by persons in the past or future.

You are overwhelmed by persons having devotion. You are pleased by Vraja. You make your devotees fixed on

you. You go to the pure forests and mountains. Your pastimes are full of good qualities. Nothing can be compared to you.

You give peace to your parents' dynasty. You give happiness, beauty and joking. You were worshiped by Indra. You show beauty by your two earrings.

You have splendid smile. You show yourself to your devotees with shining rays. You attract them with your *khañjana* bird-eyes. You have an attractive nose and teeth like *kunda* flowers. You have jewels arranged on your neck with great care and skill.

You are attractive with arm bands and anklets. There is a necklace on your chest. You have an attractive belly below your heart. You are the shelter of Lakṣmī. You are attractive with the lake of your navel.

You have silk wrapped around your hips. Your firm thighs are never tired. You have incomparable power. You are worshiped by the black rays from your knees. You teach the greedy bees how to sing by the jingling of your ornaments.

You make sounds with your ankle bells. You are respected by the cows and you protect the cows. You play the flute and carry a goad with peacock feathers. You have a stick in your hand and wear attractive clothing.

Your friends remember you with affection. You remember your friends. You desire to laugh on remembering your pastimes. You are affectionate to the fallen. You are interested in your friends' activities. You are expert in dealing with your friends and protect them.

You are affectionate to the *gopīs* with fortunate birth. You experience ever-fresh happiness and show great respect to them. Known as a cowherd by your parents, you always associate with the cowherds. O Kṛṣṇa! You have desire for you devotees at all times. Victory to you! ||93||

Staying in Vraja, you associate with your dear friends. You show such mercy. We do not pray for wealth. We do not desire anything else. We reject everything except your pastimes. Thus we purify our minds. ||94||

O Kṛṣṇa! Protect your servants. Give bliss to your parents. Maintain your assistants in play. O jewel of protection! O life! Protect the *gopīs* who take you as their very life. Our prayer will be fulfilled when you play in the excellent forests of Vraja. We pray to you with humility that you reveal these pastimes eternally. ||95||

[74] In the evening with no outsiders present, Madhukaṇṭha spoke in Rādhā's assembly with Kṛṣṇa present.

All the places and waters that Kṛṣṇa experienced when he secretly crossed the Yamunā and attained the inhabitants of Gokula in Vṛndāvana became visible to everyone in a remarkable way in Goloka. ||96||

[75] When Rādhā and others entered Goloka by airplane, in confusion they could not be attentive. To remove their confusion, gradually Kṛṣṇa, with a desire for previous pastimes which he revealed secretly on a night filled with happiness, showed all those pastimes.

Kṛṣṇa spoke:

In the jewel lotus of Gokula resides my father’s city which contains your spotless palace in which you in the form as the highest Lakṣmīs engage in pastimes with me, unseen by others. ||97||

The wealth of Vṛndāvana exists there as a picture. The bees and other entities living there enjoy that wealth with greed. Let that be! Your eyes have become like bees, greedy for that place. Ah! That wealth makes me think it is Vṛndāvana. ||98||

[76 - 77] Hearing this, the women said to him, “O Prince of Gokula! We desire pastimes in that artificial place which sounds so attractive. Millions of us will make you blissful. But we do not find this place so attractive. Therefore we pray for another place to fulfill our desires.”

[78] Smiling, he produced an enclosed area of jewels without effort and said:

Go by this path with stairs in the lower parts, lit by diamonds and jewels, and see the spotless abode.

See this city with opulence above and below, with fortune increased by the piles of gems shining like the sun and moon, with a wealth of beauty, meant for pastimes, but suffering in the absence of your pastimes. ||99||

It is deep in places like Pātāla. It is made of sunstone and moonstone. Fragrances pass through its lattice windows. It has a small lake. Its imitation birds and plants imitate the real plants and animals of Vṛndāvana. ||100||

My wealth resides in the center of this city. Your residences are arranged all around it. ||101||

[79] Seeing this, the *gopīs* did not feel the happiness of Vraja. They said, “You astonish us with your skill. Though this happiness is beyond our conception, we consider these jewel houses inferior to Vṛndāvana. We do not want them. We will have a little desire if it’s small like a desire tree forest. We desire a forest where we can experience pastimes like those we experienced before.”

[80] Rejecting his own desires, Kṛṣṇa then described attractive forests giving happiness, giving auspiciousness like houses filled with his bodily fragrance, situated in a lotus petal, devoid of thousands of jeweled walls and gates.

Explaining that all the gardens were filled with *prema,* he showed the bowers, trees, and houses made of jewels acting like friends, endowed with great beauty, as well as lakes which made friends with crystal shores, and creepers which were friends with crooked eyebrows. ||102||

He said:

There is no difference between the flower gardens and the jeweled houses. O *sakhīs*! I say what I know. Previously you were in the forest. In Goloka you are my wives in my houses. This is not known in the material world but there is no difference between Gokula and Goloka but there appears to be.” ||103||

The essence of all the opulence of Vṛndāvana is present here in these gardens. That is suitable. In the gardens reside all the Lakṣmīs, your forms, the women of Vraja, who divide the place into sections for each *gopī.* ||104||

As all the beauty of the Lakṣmīs resides in you, so all these gardens are expansions of Vṛndāvana. ||105||

[81] Seeing their desire to go to solitary places when he displayed places on the Yamunā and Govardhana, he showed these places in a hidden way. He then described them:

Look at Vṛndāvana all around. Look at Govardhana. Look at the Yamunā and the place of the *rāsa* dance with amazing beauty, beyond human intelligence. Nothing can compare to it.

What opulence can a transcendental, self-manifesting object not display? ||106||

Whatever astonishing thing one sees in pastimes seems completely new. One does not think otherwise. ||107||

[82] See all the forest animals in these forests.

The bees pierce the buds while buzzing and taste the honey. They then go from flower to flower. ||108||

The cuckoos sing, drink honey, and make the minds of women whose husbands are absent tremble. ||109||

The birds fly around and eat fruit. They build nests and carefully cover them. ||110||

The baby birds smell the flowers and chirp softly. They move about and eat voraciously. They break leaves, sleep and move from one branch to another. ||111||

Seeing the dark clouds, the peacocks dance. They cry and strut crookedly. ||112||

The deer walk about, play, chew, and wander. Moving here and there, they keep busy. ||113||

The animals play, walk, squabble, leave the place, become busy and sleep. ||114||

[83] He then described the objects of the forest with tears of affection in his eyes:

Rivers, how are you? Mountains, is everything well? Trees, are you fine? Bees, how are you? Peacocks, are you happy? Cuckoos, are you happy? Deer! What is your fortune? Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa, attaining you after a long time, overcoming separation, filled with affection, ask about your welfare. ||115||

[84] After the forest creatures meet the couple, Kṛṣṇa spoke to Rādhā in an unusual manner:

For our pleasure we made two *kuṇḍas.* Because of separation caused by Kaṃsa's disturbance, they have fallen into disuse. O Rādhā! Shining with the waters from the peaks of Govardhana, these two *kuṇḍas*, like two crest jewels, give happiness to my mind. ||116||

From the beginning, my mind thinks only of having pastimes in Vṛndāvana, on the Yamunā, on Govardhana, in Bhāṇḍira forest and at your *kuṇḍa.* I forget everything else. ||117||

Yes, I remember. All the emotions which appeared clearly, giving joy to our hearts, and which assuaged our lives during intense separation, are still here. Oh! My mind is filled with desire to nourish our enjoyment. ||118||

O friend! The sweetness of our pastimes gave pain to our hearts and nourished them through the intensity of long separation. Just as the root nourishes the entire branch, all the pastimes with *pūrva-rāga* in the past nourish the sweetness of pastimes by their *rasa.* ||119||

Remembering with you all the songs concerning I performed perviously with my *sakhīs*, I see them before me and repeatedly experience *prema* previously experienced. ||120||

O Rādhā! Please become familiar with this grove. Bring your *sakhīs*. Gather the ingredients for pastimes. Receive *rasa* and associate with my *prema.* You surpass everything. What more can I say? Bring my mind under your control. ||121||

[85] Making Rādhā favorable with many words, desiring a festival of astonishing pastimes, Kṛṣṇa spent the night anxiously.

[86] First bringing Rādhā and all the *sakhīs* together, he put her on his lap and then manifested a *rāsa* dance with an arena made of jewels and gold.

As the full moon illuminates the stars, the arena illuminated the flower groves with spotless rays. As the *tamāla* tree and gold creepers gently sway in the breeze Kṛṣṇa and the *gopīs* danced gracefully. ||122||

[87] On another night, when Rādhā had fulfilled Kṛṣṇa's desires, Kṛṣṇa manifested the *rāsa* dance with all the *gopīs* in a forest on the bank of the Yamunā.

Resonant cymbals, deep sounding flutes, many *vīṇās* and drums joined together. ||123||

[88] From Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa in the center replica forms arose. Kṛṣṇa's expansions danced with all the *gopīs* in the circle of the *rāsa.* ||124||

> The arena with its radiance shone white like the moon. The Yamunā with its spotless luster became similar to the arena. Rādhā and her *sakhīs* along with Kṛṣṇa became like the river with the beauty of their lotus faces. ||125||
>
> They danced with singing, ankle bells, belts, hips, arms, eyes, eyebrows, and clapping hands. Though one may say that they attained him by their hands and

eyes, they did not attain anything except Kṛṣṇa with their eyes and hearts. ||126||

He sang. His ankle bells jingled when he danced. His ears and eyes attained the mood of the crowd. See in the *rasa* dance! Among all unlimited pairs of Kṛṣṇa and *gopīs,* if each couple is endowed with qualities of the whole group, what can one say of the total qualities in the group? ||127||

When Kṛṣṇa danced, the *gopīs* copied his improvisations and danced fervently with their eyes. ||128||

Not attaining their eternal husband Kṛṣṇa as their lover, the *gopīs* were forcibly married to others and maintained their *dharma* of chastity (by cheating them with *māyā* forms), but met him somehow privately. Then they were separated when he went to Mathurā, but by their good fortune they finally attained him as their husband and then danced with complete happiness. ||129||

Lalitā and others are situated on the petals of the lotus of the *rāsa* arena and Rādhā is in the center. That is the usual arrangement. I will explain another arrangement: filled with extreme desire because of joy, Rādhā appears in Kṛṣṇa’s heart and also appears outside. ||130||

[89] What was explained indirectly will now be explained clearly in clear words.

Let ten million *gopīs* be the object of Kṛṣṇa’s eyes, ears, nose, skin and tongue. But I speak forcefully without reservation. Ah! Rādhā is the object of all of Kṛṣṇa’s mental functions. ||131||

Though Rādhā, existing in Kṛṣṇa's lotus heart, appears externally as a golden line, in performing affectionate actions she makes my heart immediately melt. Though thousands of *gopīs* engage in service, Rādhā melts Kṛṣṇa by her service and astonished all her associates. ||132||

Within the eight-petalled lotus, within a house made of *cintāmaṇi* among forests of creepers, shining in various colors like gems, Rādhā, surrounded by *prāṇa-sakhīs,* fanned by others, sitting on Kṛṣṇa's lap, with her hairs standing on end and perspiring, is worshiped. ||133||

Ah! Seeing Kṛṣṇa with Rādhā my body trembles. I perspire, my hairs stand on end, and tears come to my eyes. My voice chokes, my mind and body become stunned. I lose consciousness. ||134||

[90] Losing his self-control, Madhukaṇṭha's senses stopped functioning, and filled with the highest *prema*, became stunned on seeing his brother. As if possessed, he fainted for a *muhūrta*. Not only him, but his brother also attained the same state. Not only the two, the whole assembly along with Kṛṣṇa, who were listening, also fainted. After a *muhūrta* they all recovered. The two reciters were offered gifts. That is now described.

Kṛṣṇa's dear friends like Subala and Arjuna embraced the two reciters. Rādhā and her *sakhīs* offered them their joyful glances. Kṛṣṇa along with Rādhā blessed them with the touch of their feet. What was not given to the two? ||135||

[91] When asked what they wanted, the two learned reciters said, "By your mercy we have attained the benediction of dwelling at your lotus feet. O Rādhā and

Kṛṣṇa! We desire that we may describe your pastimes.” || 136||

[92] Some women bards with a mood of friendship for Rādhā began offering prayers following the events mentioned in the first Campū.

O Rādhā! O Rādhā! Daughter of Vṛṣabhānu! Lakṣmī serves you. You are the best among all the men and women of Vraja.

You give Kṛṣṇa bliss by your praiseworthy, intense desire. You have taken birth by good fortune to benefit all people, in order to show your qualities. Your birth astonished everyone and gave bliss to everyone.

You have beauty and munificence, you attract everyone, and create beauty. By your birth you created doubt in your father though he was happy. You had marks of royalty on your hands.

You were forbidden to go out and instead played indoors with your friends. You gave bliss in your infancy and created laughter. You were fickle in playing and ignored wearing a dress.

You were covered with dust and would go to the *bhāṇḍīra* trees. You were covered by mud and noisily called your friends. You were locked in the house by your brother. Your pure mother fed you breast milk and raised you.

Sometimes your mother would put you to sleep. Though you had never heard of Kṛṣṇa your form became remarkable because of him. You were overcome on hearing the flute song, telling you to marry the cowherd boy.

You could not speak. You were protected by your father. The wind blew and by that you contacted Kṛṣṇa’s fragrance. You dressed yourself nicely for him. Hearing of him, and tinged with fear, you developed attraction for him.

You realized Kṛṣṇa in your heart. You asked your father for marriage to him. You desired Kṛṣṇa with beautiful limbs and dark complexion.

He was most desired among all things. Vasudeva wanted to curb the evil kings. On his advice, which became an impediment, Garga made you marry another man who was supposed to be the same.

Because of your young age, you were not developed in body and affection. Therefore you went to the mother-in-law’s house. Attachment to Kṛṣṇa increased. You complexion became full. Your ears were pierced.

Your hair was perfect, and your nose appeared beautiful on your face. You associated with the *sakhīs.* The sweetness of your body was the height of happiness. You felt pain in your heart to be married wrongly. Kṛṣṇa also felt pain.

Your lamenting friends cared for you. You were the object of mercy from infancy. On seeing you, the wise thought you were Lakṣmī. Other Lakṣmīs also desired to be born in your family.

They also desired Kṛṣṇa but their bodies withered out of despair. On hearing your words, they became happy. ||137||

As an infant, because of your beauty and character, you attracted and gave joy to the universe. Your

parents lamented with worry because of your blossoming beauty. ||138||

Also:

You came near Kṛṣṇa and were relieved of pain. Many times you saw him. You performed worship to see him. You became bewildered on seeing him.

In the morning you wondered whether you would see him. During the day you would wonder where he was. He attracted your heart by his flute, and then you became full of thoughts.

You desired Kṛṣṇa who had similar nature to yours and you appeared beautiful to him. In the evening he would bring the cows home. He appeared like the moon.

To see his face you met with your friends, filled with desire. Controlled by *prema*, you saw him. He was also full of attraction to the extreme.

He saw your deep, hidden, firm, indestructible desire. He lost all determination and self-control. Meeting him, you created auspiciousness.

When, full of affection, he came to your house, your people kept you inside. Having no opportunity to meet for a long time, you became miserable.

The suffering and cause of the suffering continued. You went to the house of your false husband and joining him, were under his control. You became frightened in trespassing *dharma*.

You gave up the idea of throwing yourself in Kāliya's mouth in his lake as it was unfavorable. When you went to Kāliya's lake your opportunity to be saved was destroyed, for absorbed in him, you sank in the water.

Yamunā, with tears of mercy in her eyes, knowing of your love and the future meeting, came to that place, took you to her place and worshiped you.

Paurṇamāsī consoled you with pleasing words, taking away the pain by her blessings. You were taken by your *sakhīs* to your unpleasant house, and became fearful.

Worrying about how to reduce your attraction, your house became an obstacle. In great separation, your body withered through frustrated attempts to meet.

All of you were in the same condition. Your effulgence faded and you felt miserable. To attract you, full of all good qualities, who were full of *anurāga* and continually chanting about his qualities, he played his flute, endowed with his independent strength, in an astounding manner. ||139||

Though going to the wrong house, you kept Kṛṣṇa in your heart as your lover while maintaining your chastity. When Kṛṣṇa became firmly fixed in your heart without obstruction, it was considered most inauspicious. ||140||

Also:

Your pastimes are astonishing. You are steady like a mountain. The famous pastimes of Kṛṣṇa, the essence of all people, should be described to people who are always aware of Kṛṣṇa and skillful at worshiping him.

Because of his flute playing you lost consciousness and gave up the desire for life. Because you were unable to meet him, your limbs became agitated. You used intelligence to counteract this.

Your exhaustion disappeared. Your friends came to your house. You then made arrangements to meet Kṛṣṇa, shining like a full ocean.

When he appeared, he bowed to your feet and, shining like a new cloud, extinguished your fear. The *kuṃkuma* from your breast touched his feet.

The Pulinda women took that *kuṃkuma*. Among all the *gopīs* free of anxiety, your body was most astonishing. Your *anurāga* was the most excellent object.

You met him in the autumn in the waxing phase of the moon and worshiped him. He was full of *anurāga* and most beautiful. Meeting all the *sakhīs* you experienced bliss.

You were frightened by his joking and indifference. But on meeting, you became happy and began singing. He embraced you on the sandy bank of the Yamunā. You gave up playing with Kṛṣṇa because he was equal to all the women. Your power of discrimination went to sleep.

You were fixed on worshiping only Kṛṣṇa. Nothing else was on your mind. Thus people praise you as most fortunate. Without your friends you enjoyed with Kṛṣṇa alone. Your friends praised you and your enemies castigated you.

Coming to a tree, you could not walk anymore. Hearing his rough words you became angry and lost your patience. Kṛṣṇa lost taste and left you. You were without protection. You then met your friends and you cried together.

When you searched for him but could not find him, he was playing by himself. He thought he should show himself. You then went to the broad Yamunā.

Anxious to attain him, you began singing to attract him. You longed to meet him. He worshiped you but he made you become proud,

Your laughter and pastimes give joy. You played in the water to get relief from fatigue. On the bank of the Yamunā you glanced at him. You are his lover. You became agreeable to his wishes. Going home, your heart was filled with affection and pain. You were not ashamed to desire meeting him again. ||141||

O Rādhā, praised by all! Your fame has diligently conquered unlimited co-wives. Your nature is to bewilder the world with your supreme pastimes. But because your heart is dedicated thoroughly to Kṛṣṇa, you are not aware of those pastimes. ||142||

Alṣo:

You became expert in pastimes and were endowed with all auspiciousness. Sometimes you engaged in pastimes with attractive Kṛṣṇa, and sometimes were free of pastimes.

In going on the Ambikā pilgrimage, you decorated yourself. You were joyous in the *horikā* festival. O golden Rādhā! You did not accept the jewel taken from Śaṅkhacūḍa out of pride. When Kṛṣṇa went out to herd the cows, you sang continually, surrounded by your friends. When he killed Vṛṣāsura, you joked with your beloved.

You gave him joy. With shining face you made a *kuṇḍa.* You looked beautiful on Govardhana, the sum of all happiness, with colorful clothing.

With great effulgence, you were absorbed in his words. When he suddenly left, you withered away. He sent news. Seeing Uddhava you became angry.

Thinking a bee was his messenger, you went to the bee and out of madness from separation, you spoke your mind, full of pain.

Becoming happy after expressing your grief, you then became filled with pain because of the insurmountable difficulties. You then became happy because of his soothing message.

In pain of separation you had left your house. He was anxious to accept you as his wife, and praised your desire. You became happy.

You had full faith that he would return and trusted his words. Your life was dedicated to his pleasure. On his order, you returned to Vraja (from Kurukṣetra) and again felt pain.

When he returned to Gokula you were there. You met him. You did not break your chastity since the former marriage was illusory.

Since Abhimanyu and others had married your replicas, that was acceptable and you married Kṛṣṇa through Paurṇamāsī's arrangements. Your qualities and dress are exceptional. You surpass all other *gopīs* by your natural qualities.

Among all the women with *prema,* Vṛndā and your *sakhīs* are your intimate friends. As the wife of Kṛṣṇa

you show a gentle smile and decorate yourself with sandalwood.

Your appearance creates auspiciousness. Your pastimes are marvelous. You dwell where you please. Your endeavors never fail. Your house is full of joy. You illuminate Nanda's heart. You are illuminated by Kṛṣṇa. You dwell in a cave at Govardhana. You manifest quarrels in *prema.* You control Kṛṣṇa. O Rādhā! O Rādhā! You reign supreme. You reign supreme. ||143||

Pained by long separation, Rādhā knew that Kṛṣṇa, whom she longed for, would return after giving happiness to Ugrasena of the Yadu dynasty. With no further obstructions, she brought Kṛṣṇa under her control by her pastimes. May Rādhā dressed auspiciously protect our auspiciousness! ||144||

[93] Having heard this and fixing within themselves the happiness from describing the pastimes, after offering respects, the two most qualified reciters, wearing the offerings bestowed upon them, making the road wet with their tears, returned to their homes. Their friends also returned home, having attained the greatest happiness. The *sakhīs,* full of joy, taking up their articles such as *cāmaras,* began their services with attention at suitable times.

[94] Relishing the talks of their previous pastimes, with great thirst for each other, Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa attained bliss on an attractive bed prepared with joy.

[95] What more can be said? Their activities, like pearl garland, play continuously in the hearts of their *sakhīs.*

When far apart, they continually thought of the separation and experienced this period as a dream. Deep

within their hearts, they saw each other amidst the *sakhīs* joking. Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa, overcoming all unlimited obstacles, were then married. If they enjoy privately, so what? ||145||

Overcoming all obstacles, obtaining happiness as a married couple, with tears in their eyes, in private they look at the face of their partner when the other is sleeping. Wiping their eyes, and lifting the tip of their nose, they kiss the other's cheeks, merge heart to heart, and drown in happiness. ||146||

This is the Second Campū of what was previously started. This pure work has manifested in the heart as nectar for persons of this world and the next. By this work composed of the bliss of the union of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa, the writer has been engaged in a pleasurable task and attained indescribable happiness. ||147||

[96] Those who desire to see Vraja and to attain Goloka will achieve that destination by this work.

I desire to see Kṛṣṇa's bees, birds, deer, craftsmen, *brāhmaṇas, kṣatriyas* and *vaiśyas,* servants, younger brothers , the cows, friends, Balarāma, mothers and fathers, and the *gopīs* and among them, Rādhā, the chief of the women, in order of greatness. When will I see them daily? ||148||

O Kṛṣṇa! O Caitanya! O Rūpa and Sanātana! O Gopāla! O Raghunātha! O Vallabha who has attained Vraja! Please protect me! ||149||

In 1649 Samvat,[27] Jīva has completed this Campū in Vṛndāvana during Vaiśākha month. ||150||

[97] Or the first words of the previous verse can read "1514 Bengali year."

Though I am fallen I have shown the full *rasa* of all the pastimes in order. Among the pastimes, each person should choose some according to his inclination and use those for worship. ||151||

Kṛṣṇa, like a cook, continually arranges step-by-step full *rasa* in order to give pleasure to the *rasika.* The *rasika,* tasting everything step-by-step, attains full satisfaction. The *rasika* attains success by that full satisfaction, and becomes an expert taster. ||152||

[98] Brahmā has defined this taste in his prayers in the *Bhāgavatam:*

> *prapañcaṃ niṣprapañco 'pi viḍambayasi bhūtale |*
> *prapanna-janatānanda-sandohaṃ prathituṃ prabho ||*
>
> My dear master, although you have nothing to do with material existence, you come to this earth and imitate material life just to expand the varieties of ecstatic enjoyment for your surrendered devotees. SB 10.14.37

[99] Concerning the shelters of *rasa*, I must confess the following:

Śukadeva has mentioned some of the *gopīs* only indirectly. My heart trembles because I have revealed the names of those *gopīs* in describing the confidential pastimes. ||153||

I have been very bold to present *rasa* in this work. This rashness will embarrass Kṛṣṇa and his *gopīs*. If the wise see my work, they will become frightened and just flatter me. ||154||

In revealing this work full of *rasa* I have shown rashness. Ah! Misfortune! The cultured women will be embarrassed. But they should not be embarrassed, for, endowed with prayers for the power of intelligence

possessed by the great poets, the author simply serves the Lord in seclusion for the benefit of the world. ||155||

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[1] *Mada* is juice that drips from the forehead of a rutting male elephant.
[2] *Devatās* are called *asvapat* or sleepless, seeing everything.
[3] King Jayasena of Avantī married Rājādhidevī, sister of Vasudeva. Mitravindā was his daughter. She later married Kṛṣna.
[4] Madhupa means a bee or a drinker.
[5] This seems to be dvitīyād vai bhayaṃ bhavati. Bṛhad-āraṇyaka Upaniṣad 1.4.2
[6] bhratah premnah svarupam yat tad dhi jananti tad-vidah
yasya cittardrata-jatam bahyam kampadi-lakshanam

O brother, the wise know that the nature of this love is characterized inside the heart by melting and outside the heart by trembling and a host of other symptoms. *Brhad-bhāgavatāmrta* 6.226

[7] This refers to SB 10.54.22: This wicked-minded cowherd boy, infatuated with his prowess, has violently abducted my sister. But today I will remove his pride with my sharp arrows.
[8] Devamiḍha had a *kṣatriya* wife and a *vaiśya* wife. Śura was the son of the *kṣatriya* wife. Śura's son was Vasudeva. Parjanya was the son of the *vaiśya* wife. Parjanya's son was Nanda.

[9] This is a play on the words *pārśvaga* (close associate) and *pārśvaka* (one who seeks wealth by indirect means—a thief).
[10] This is the name of the last chapters from 22-37.
[11] King Nimi was cursed to leave his body. He then occupied the bodies of all beings causing them to blink their eyes.
[12] vārāṇasyāṃ viśālākṣī vimalā puruṣottame |

rukmiṇī dvāravatyāṃ tu rādhā vṛndāvane vane ||

[13] Peace, war, marching, encampment,, division and shelter of a more powerful king.
[14] Durvāsā ordered Krṣṇa and Rukmiṇī to serve as the horses for his chariot when he came to Dvārakā.
[15] This fire with face of a horse burns in the ocean.
[16] The eternal couple, Lakṣmī and Nārāyaṇa, are expansions of the eternal couple, Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa.
[17] BRS 2.5.118
[18] The *caturthi homa* performed on the fourth day is last part of the marriage ceremony.
[19] *Āratrika* using jewels.
[20] Candrāvalī was Rukmiṇī. Rādhā was Satyabhāmā. Viśākhā was Kālindī. Lalitā was Jāmbavatī. Śyāmā was Lakṣmaṇā, Śaibyā was Mitravindā, and Bhadrāvalī was Bhadrā. Padmā was Satyā. *Uttara Campū* 17.195
[21] rātrau cen manmathākrānta-mānasaṃ devakī-sutam |
yajed rāsa-pariśrāntaṃ gopī-maṇḍala-madhyagam || Nārada-pañcarātra 3.12.2

[22] SB 9.18. The story of Ratnāvalī is told in Śrīharṣa's *Ratnāvalī-nāṭikā*
[23] All the women undergo eight conditions: *abhisārikā (*going for an appointment*),* *vāsa-sajjā* (decorating herself)*,* *unkanthitā* (anxiety because of delay), *khaṇḍitā* (devastated)*,* *vipralabdhā* (feeling cheated)*,* *kalahāntaritā* (separation by quarrel)*,* *proṣita-preyasī (*great separation*)* and *svādhīna-bharṭrkā* (controlling the lover)*.* Ujjvala-nīla-maṇi 5.70

[24] J*ārā* refers to a woman having an illicit relationship with a lover without marriage.
[25] This is a famous verse found quoted in many works including *Sāhitya-darpaṇa.*
[26] After returning from Kurukṣetra, Nanda settled in Gaurayi. This is mentioned at the end of Chapter 24.
[27] This would be 1592 CE.